Were the years after 1815 a period of peace? To Julius von Wickede, the principal war correspondent of Die Gartenlaube and one of the most famous military writers of the 1850s and 1860s, the early nineteenth century had been characterized by a series of ‘struggles’ and ‘campaigns’ in South America, Greece, Poland, Spain, and Algeria, in which the subjects of his books had fought as adventurers, mercenaries, and professional soldiers.1 To many other observers of European affairs, like a ‘former Bavarian officer’ writing anonymously in the Allgemeine Zeitung in 1851, ‘thirty-three years had elapsed and Europe had enjoyed a peace which, it appeared, would never end’.2 If this ‘golden peace’ had continued, contemporaries would again have been faced with the spectacle, as in the Holy Roman Empire, of having pictures of grenadiers painted onto their guard-houses, since real guards would no longer be needed, he went on.3 Yet peace had not proved durable, with wars involving European Great Powers breaking out in northern Italy, Hungary, and Schleswig-Holstein in 1848, in the Crimea in 1853, and in Italy again in 1859.4 Together, such conflicts occupied a prominent place in eight of the sixteen years between 1848 and 1863, after which the wars of German unification began. Although later widely understood to constitute an historical caesura, these wars, too, were seen by most contemporaries as the extension of a single era of international instability, in which the years of conflict outnumbered those of peace.

The escalation of each conflict seemed likely, reawakening fears of a European conflagration—which had never entirely disappeared—akin to those of the revolutionary and Napoleonic periods.5 Britain had threatened to join the conflict in

2 Allgemeine Zeitung, 4 Apr. 1851, 1500. See also Grenzbote, 1855, vol. 13, no. 4, 58: ‘This period of peace has been a long one and, in a certain sense, first ended with the Crimea expedition.’
3 Allgemeine Zeitung, 4 Apr. 1851, 1500.
5 Even Great Powers on the ‘right side’ were criticized in the German press: see, for example, Kladderadatsch’s depiction (1855, vol. 8, 196) of a French eagle and a British lion feeding on the carcass of Sevastopol and throwing tidbits to Turkey and Sardinia.
northern Germany in 1848–51; Russia had given military assistance to Austria in Hungary in 1849; and the Habsburg and Hohenzollern monarchies had been poised to join France, Britain, and the Ottoman Empire against Russia in 1853–6, which had appeared to offer ‘a chance of a war of all Europe against Russia’, as Marx and Engels eagerly put it. Prussia and other German states had anticipated participation in the war between Piedmont, France, and Austria in 1859. What was more, colonial, national, and civil wars outside Europe had become increasingly difficult to ignore, with the American Civil War, in particular, appearing as an augury of the worst effects of modern warfare in general. Eventually, wrote Wickede from a more optimistic point of view, ‘the mythical idea of a perpetual peace’, which—he claimed—had ‘dominated so many minds’ before 1848, had disappeared forever, along with ‘that mad notion of the dispensability or even burden of an army which is well-trained and ready for war, even in peacetime’. The 1850s and 1860s seemed to prove, as historians and other commentators had continued to believe throughout the years after 1815, that war was inevitable. Contemporaries’ impressions of such wars were, to a large extent, the product of press reportage, which was combined with an eclectic stock of pictures, personal accounts, and historical narratives of conflict. Given that revolutionary violence had been kept separate in onlookers’ minds from military combat, few Germans could claim to have had direct experience of warfare. At its height in 1850, Schleswig-Holstein’s army numbered 860 officers and 43,288 men, joined in 1848 and 1849 by much smaller contingents of Prussian and confederal troops. As in 1848–9, many German–Austrian combatants were to be found amongst the Habsburg monarchy’s 242,000 troops deployed in northern Italy in 1859 but their experiences, and the communities to which they were relayed, remained isolated to an extent from a wider German public sphere, as a consequence of the different internal and external priorities of the Austrian state and its German-speaking political constituencies. ‘I can only lament that Austria manages to have so little effect in the press at this time,’ the publisher of the Allgemeine Zeitung Georg von Cotta had written to an Austrian official and occasional journalist in August 1857: ‘The A. Z. neglects it and, since Austrian newspapers are not read at all in Germany, it is only the Frankfurt Oberpostamtszeitung through which Austria speaks for itself, but this only has 2,000 subscribers and no influence at all on public opinion.’ In contrast to the experiences of their predecessors during the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars, which had often been first- or second-hand, Germans’ conceptions of warfare by the 1850s were closely connected to received ideas, mediated

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images, and reported events. Thus, although reporters were anxious, in the words of one correspondent of the *Allgemeine Zeitung* after the battle for Eckernförde in April 1849, to establish the ‘sources of their portrayals’ (in this case, the ‘tales of a bombardier from Holstein and the testimony of captured Danes’ as well as the journalist’s own ‘eye- and ear-witness account’), they posted their articles alongside historical recollections and visual depictions of previous conflicts. This chapter investigates the extent to which such traditional representations of warfare were reinforced or contradicted by the varied reporting of modern military conflicts after 1815.

**THE COVERAGE OF WAR IN THE PRESS**

A transformation of the press and public sphere took place in the German lands during the mid-nineteenth century which had the potential to alter the way in which readers conceived of military conflicts. Much of the debate about a reading public has concerned its extent and significance, not the expansion of the press, which was more or less constant: in 1826, there were 371 separate German language newspapers, 688 in 1848, 845 in 1858, and 1,217 in 1867. The lifting of censorship and interest in politics during the revolution had led to a sudden mushrooming of titles—1,102 by 1850—but this figure remained as exceptional as the circumstances which had produced it. Although there was a quantitative leap in circulation after the adoption of rotary printing presses—making it possible to produce cheap copy for a mass market—from the 1870s onwards, the readership of the principal newspapers and periodicals had increased markedly before then.

In 1813, the *Vossische Zeitung* had had 4,000 subscribers for its three weekly editions, the *Leipziger Zeitung* 5,000, and the *Hamburgische Correspondenten* 10,000; by the 1850s and 1860s, the best-selling newspapers had subscriptions for daily issues of 10,000–15,000, with popular publications such as the *Volkszeitung* (Berlin) reaching 26,450. Illustrated periodicals such as the satirical *Kladderadatsch* had 24,550 subscribers (1854) and the family magazine *Gartenlaube* 42,000,
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(1856), rising to 100,000 in 1860 and 155,000–160,000 in 1863.15 The majority of publications appealed largely to middle-class readers, with the *Deutsche Zeitung*, for instance, drawing subscribers predominantly from the civil service (21.5 per cent), educated professions (35.8 per cent), and commerce (12 per cent) between 1847 and 1850, yet they also extended beyond such circles.16 ‘News’ was not only discussed within the family, as newspapers were passed from one relative to another, but within reading societies, lending libraries, taverns, and coffee houses, extending a knowledge of domestic and foreign affairs to a calendar and almanac-reading public, which encompassed a significant part of the literate 80 per cent or so of men and 50 per cent or more of women of early nineteenth-century western German towns—even if it also excluded the lower orders from regular daily or weekly exposure to state or national politics.17 The proliferation of titles and expansion of circulation for each title meant, by the 1860s, that most educated Germans and Austrians regularly read a newspaper or periodical. In Prussia, it has been estimated that weekly newspaper sales in the mid-1850s amounted to one copy for every fifteen householders and one for every two or three voters.18 The actual number of readers of newspapers and periodicals was probably between three and five times this figure.19

The press in the German lands remained varied and central to political life, despite censorship, aided by the patchwork of individual states with their twenty-seven different sets of press laws.20 In some states such as Hanover, official activity was significant, with 54 per cent of Hanoverian papers controlled by the government and a further 26 per cent occasionally influenced by it, according to one estimate.21 Even here, however, the chief of the Press Bureau Oskar Meding did not believe the liberal and other milieux of the larger cities to be susceptible to government influence.22 Elsewhere, the press was less restricted, despite common

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practices such as the seizure of individual editions of newspapers, the withdrawal of licences to publish or sell, the lodging of sizeable deposits with the authorities, interference with postal subscriptions, collective liability for the contents of a publication on the part of authors, publishers, printers, and sellers, and the banning of ‘foreign’ papers. Partly because it did not have a system of deposits and had retained jury trials for cases involving the press, which had been introduced in 1848, Bavaria was notorious for seizing copies of newspapers, with Karl Brater, the Bavarian deputy and newspaper publisher, estimating that the power had been used on 2,520 occasions between 1850 and 1858, making it virtually a daily occurrence, yet it generally took place without further penalty or charge. The Bavarian Ministry of Justice itself seemed to doubt the efficacy of press controls, most notably in a fifteen-page memorandum published in 1869, which looked back to the 1850s and 1860s:

At different times, and namely at times of agitation, the demand resurfaced to again exercise influence over the press, which was usual in the old legal order. The permissibility of confiscation gave a helping hand towards this end. There was at times the fullest and, it cannot be denied, also a barely permitted use of this method. With what success? Individual evil-intentioned voices in the press were silenced, and the admirers of the past were almost and temporarily satisfied, but only by summoning forth in this fashion, and giving actual credence to, new storms and, at the same time, by making the well-intentioned institution of confiscation, which was not incidentally intended to extend beyond the sphere of penal legislation, into the object of unanimous antipathy.25

The President of the Ministerrat Ludwig von der Pfordten confessed in 1857 that ‘the judgement of charges against the press by juries does not safeguard effective repression of the excesses of the press’.26

With states like Saxe-Coburg-Gotha and Sachsen-Weimar—where politics could be discussed openly—constituting ‘a happy oasis in the middle of the political desert that covered the greater part of Germany’, in Karl Biedermann’s words, it proved difficult for any German government to stifle press opinion, especially in the sphere of foreign policy, which had traditionally been subject to fewer controls.27 At the time of the constitutional crisis in Kurhessen, which provoked a stand-off between Vienna and Berlin, precipitating the Olmütz Punctuation on 29 November 1850, the press had demonstrated how unwieldy it was, in the words of the Allgemeine Zeitung: ‘What the Bavarian papers are silent about, the Swabian ones report on, and in Frankfurt, where the routes of the world and the telegraph lines converge and where one is so close to the site of Kurhessen, the press produces

26 Pfordten to Schrenck, 10 Oct. 1857, R. Kohmen, Pressepoltik, 121.
27 The forty-eighter Karl Biedermann, Mein Leben, vol. 2, 116, had gone there in 1855 to edit the Weimarer Zeitung.
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the most extensive and newest reports every day.’

Even in Prussia, ‘public opinion’ refused ‘blindly to trust’ in government policy, to the chagrin of Friedrich Wilhelm IV, but instead wanted ‘to make itself independent’, in Varnhagen von Ense’s opinion.

When the king was attacked by the Vossische Zeitung for sacking Gustav von Bonin as War Minister in 1854, Karl Ludwig Friedrich von Hinckeldey, the Generalpolizeidirektor of Berlin, reportedly shrugged his shoulders and said that the courts usually acquitted journalists in such circumstances. The obverse of such press independence was the ability of editors to shape the political agenda and actively to call for war or to depict—or misrepresent—it as inevitable, which is what the National-Zeitung had done on 8 November 1850, in its eagerness to push a purportedly pro-German Prussia into a war against a reactionary Habsburg monarchy, when it had wrongly reported that the bellicosity of the Prussian public had prompted the government to mobilize troops.

With 1,160,214 newspapers sold every week in Prussia by 1855, the Prussian state lacked the means to control the press. Throughout Germany, the expansion of the press and the legacies of 1848 left a diverse public sphere in place: by the mid-1850s, it has been estimated that 34.3 per cent of newspapers were ‘oppositional’, mainly liberal or democratic, 4.4 per cent Catholic, 6.7 per cent neutral, 14.2 per cent conservative, and 40.4 ‘governmental’, with a higher tally of official publications in rural regions (72.7 per cent in Silesia) and a lower one in urbanized ones (34.7 per cent in the Rhineland), where liberal organs such as the Kölische Zeitung (12,250 copies in 1854) and the Elberfelder Zeitung (3,200) were dominant.

The bulk of newspapers’ coverage had been devoted traditionally to foreign affairs, with diplomatic and military conflicts occupying many column inches. In the Allgemeine Zeitung, the balance between international and national reports had been 87:13 in 1824 and 74:26 in 1842. The recollection of the Badenese journalist and revolutionary J. G. A. Wirth that he had gained his political education from the French press, the articles of which were reprinted in German newspapers, was not unusual.

Even major publications like the Allgemeine Zeitung had not begun to print articles by their own editors until 1836, preferring to use pieces from other publications and occasional correspondents until that point. From eight o’clock in the morning, when the daily newspapers arrived at the office, the editor-in-chief Karl Joseph Stegmann had himself worked his way through Le Moniteur, Journal des débats, and The Times in order to see what would form the

30 10 May 1854, ibid., 63–4. Hinckeldey was, according to Varnhagen, also acting to get his own back for unpunished attacks on him by the Kreuzzzeitung, but he made the argument only because it was credible.
31 National-Zeitung, 8 Nov. 1850, cited in Buschmann, Einkreisung, 45.
32 K. Wappler, Regierung und Presse, 59.
33 Ibid., 60.
35 Ibid., 124.
By 1824, the journalists of the Augsburg publication were gutting forty-five newspapers—most of which were foreign—in this fashion, extending the practice under Stegmann’s successor after 1835, Gustav Kolb, to include the merging and rewriting of pieces from other newspapers within single AZ articles. A network of contacts in Bavaria, the rest of Germany, and abroad was developed simultaneously, growing from fourteen correspondents in 1799 to 150 in the years between 1807 and 1819, with the publishers Johann Friedrich and Georg von Cotta helping to select them and arranging their fees. By 1845, the ‘directory of all correspondents of the Allgemeine Zeitung’ registered 250 writers, some of whom submitted only occasional reports: twenty-three in Paris and thirteen in Vienna, with a smaller number in other European capitals and single correspondents further afield in China, the East Indies, Mexico, and Peru. Like the majority of other major newspapers and periodicals, most of which had networks of their own correspondents (albeit less extensive ones), the AZ also relied on Wolff’s Telegraphisches Bureau (WTB), which started to send news to Berlin publications at the end of 1849 and to those of other cities during the 1850s, drawing largely on articles from the foreign press. After using British cables during the Crimean and Franco-Austrian wars, WTB signed an agreement with Reuters (Britain) and Havas (France) to share information in August 1859.

All these changes in the reporting of news ensured that foreign affairs remained central to the growth of the press during the 1850s and 1860s, accounting for 60 per cent of lead articles in Prussia between 1854 and 1857. In part, a foreign focus was the corollary of censorship, with lead articles on domestic policy rising from 10–20 per cent in Prussia during the 1850s to 50 per cent in the first year of the ‘New Era’ in 1858 to 80 per cent in 1862, before dropping back to 20–30 per cent in 1864–6. In part, the focus was structural, as an article in the Gartenlaube, entitled ‘A Workshop of Contemporary History’, revealed in 1866, as it looked behind the façade of the offices of the Kölnische Zeitung—emblazoned in large gold letters—in ‘the great building at 76–78 Breitstraße’:

> Journalism in our time has achieved so much in respect of the speed of dissemination of the most recent and latest news from all areas of the world that the astonishment of the layman seems to be justified, and the traveller who is not used, with only a Bädeker in his hand, to allow place after place to fly past will certainly not miss the opportunity of having a look at those institutions of a newspaper which create the pleasure of informing himself of everything important that happens in the world from day to day…

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37 Ibid., 34.  
38 Ibid.  
39 Ibid., 35–6.  
40 J. Requate, Journalismus als Beruf (Göttingen, 1995), 279.  
41 D. Basse, Wolff’s Telegraphisches Bureau 1849 bis 1933 (Munich, 1991), 17–18.  
42 Ibid., 26.  
44 Ibid., 381.
Walking down a long corridor, covered with carpet, we find ourselves, in following the production of the newspaper systematically, initially in the editors’ office, less to examine the inner being of a newspaper’s editors . . . as to get to know its external activities. It is just eight o’clock in the morning but all the editors are fully occupied. The French and English post has already come in; the correspondence which has arrived is being edited; ruthlessly, the red pen, this sentence-killing, feared instrument of our gentlemen-colleagues, across individual sections which are marred by sweeping statements, lack of clarity, an undesirable proclivity or other incurable, organic defect. Other letters meet with a still worse fate: they go straight into the grave of the waste-paper basket. . . . With the speed of the wind, the editors let their pencils and quills fly across the paper in order to arrive at their own ideas, whether in the form of a lead article or as an introduction and notes to reports sent in from every region of the world.\textsuperscript{45}

The established practices of the newspaper business ensured that various perspectives of German and foreign wars were presented to readers, with reports from publications’ own editors and correspondents placed alongside those of the foreign press. Such juxtaposition did not prevent newspapers adopting unambiguous political and diplomatic positions, however, which became an object of official interest. Thus, although Kolb wanted to be ‘a disinterested observer’ in the manner of his predecessor, the \textit{Allgemeine Zeitung} under his stewardship was known as a liberal, pro-Austrian publication.\textsuperscript{46} The editor ‘reined himself and his paper in so that the many-sided content of each question was fully expressed,’ wrote the publicist Julius Fröbel of the editor’s apparently unrealizable ideal: ‘One had usually known for a long time on which side he stood, but he allowed opinions which diverged from his own to be printed without contradicting them.’\textsuperscript{47} Editors like Kolb were instrumental in determining the direction of editorial policy, prompting the press offices of the Habsburg and Hohenzollern monarchies to analyse and attempt to influence their decisions. Kolb was ‘always strongly courted by diplomats and statesmen’, as one contemporary recalled.\textsuperscript{48} At the end of 1851, Schwarzenberg himself had complained through an intermediary that the ‘A. Z.’, despite not belonging ‘to the detractors of Austria’, had ‘no political conviction’ and therefore ‘no common sentiment’ in support of Vienna, effectively sharing the principles of men like Heinrich von Gagern, who were set on pursuing their plans for Germany even at the risk of ‘civil war’.\textsuperscript{49} During the Crimean War, the Habsburg \textit{Presseleitungskomitee}, which had been founded in 1852, reported that Kolb was ‘inclined toward Austria’, with the newspaper ‘elastic’ as a consequence of its ‘almost impossible programme’ of being ‘impartial’ but also accessible ‘directly’ through its publisher Georg von Cotta, who—mindful of the ‘circumstance that the \textit{Allgemeine Zeitung} has the greater part of its sales in the Austrian monarchy’—had assured Vienna ‘in a private letter’ that the publication would, ‘in the face of all eventualities in the oriental question and its ramifications in Germany, hold

\textsuperscript{46} G. Kolb cited in E. Heyck, \textit{Die Allgemeine Zeitung}, 117.
\textsuperscript{47} Ibid., 119.\textsuperscript{48} Ludwig Steub cited ibid., 124.
true to Austria’. The committee’s annual report for 1854 was presented to the Austrian government on 7 June 1855, K. Paupié, Handbuch der österreichischen Pressegeschichte, vol. 2, 24–5.


52 Ibid., 27.


54 W. H. Riehl, Kulturgeschichtliche Charakterköpfe, 3rd edn (Stuttgart, 1899), 90.

55 Ibid.

56 Ibid.
confederal Zentraluntersuchungskommission in the 1820s. Characters such as Kolb or his namesake Georg Friedrich Kolb, a forty-eighth from the Bavarian Palatinate who became the political editor of the Neue Frankfurter Zeitung in 1859, articulated their own, independent, sometimes idiosyncratic stance on war, willing to attack both allies and opponents, with Georg Friedrich Kolb opposing the anti-Austrian policies of North German democrats—including Vogt and Lassalle—in 1859 but then proceeding—in a retrospective article in 1860—to advocate a ‘struggle for unity, not against those abroad, but against the small and great states of Germany’, especially Austria.

In general, liberal editors were belligerent in the name of a ‘German’ and ‘western’ cause. Karl Heinrich Brüggemann, the editor-in-chief of the Kölnische Zeitung, and Otto Elben, the editor and publisher of the Schwäbischer Merkur, were cases in point. The former had been imprisoned for eight years in Prussia during the 1830s, having been influenced by ‘the ramifications of the French Revolution’ in Germany during his time as a student at Bonn, most notably the causes of ‘the freedom of the press and the political unity of the German fatherland’. During the revolution of 1848–9, Brüggemann had demanded ‘measures for a timely war readiness on the part of Germany’ and had backed Prussia’s drawing of ‘the Reich’s sword for Schleswig-Holstein’, since ‘the opportunity was there’:

Europe’s inimical main powers had been lamed by fear of revolution and the desire burned in all hearts in Germany for Prussia to stand at the head of a national rebirth and to see an end brought to the growing anarchy of spirits through the violent jolt of a glorious decision.

When Prussia failed to act on behalf of the revolutionary cause, the journalist had reminded the government via the columns of the newspaper that, ‘in times of danger, right lies with might, not with contracts’. ‘In Schleswig, Poland, at home, everywhere, one wants, above all, courage and decisive action’, he went on in April 1848:

The Volk… will be ready for every sacrifice as soon as you tell it what sacrifices you require of it! And it will be enriched by such sacrifices, for they procure for it the bulwark of all prosperity, the treasure of trust in itself, in the states which it bears and which it will be borne by! Because the ‘powers of the Reich’ were ‘rather theoretical and fictional’, he had advised—against those revolutionaries, including ‘much-respected Dahlmann’, who wanted ‘to mediatize or dissolve the armies of Prussia and Austria’—in favour of making the Prussian army ‘the actual point of crystallization of a future Reich

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executive'. After the ‘failure of the Frankfurt Parliament’, the same wish for the Hohenzollern monarchy to countenance war for the sake of ‘Germany’, as long as it has not improved its mastery of state fragmentation, led Brüggemann to criticize Berlin’s ‘isolation’ during the Crimean War, warning it in a series of five articles in February 1855 that it faced a repeat of 1806, following its decision not to back Vienna (as in 1805). Although the editor was dismissed, after Joseph DuMont—the owner of the Kölnische Zeitung—was threatened with the withdrawal of the newspaper’s licence by the Prussian authorities, his replacement Heinrich Kruse continued to criticize Prussia for having missed ‘the most favourable opportunity’ of entering the war against Russia, which ‘unborn generations would have to regret’. The Rhineland would maintain its western outlook, as it had ‘twenty or thirty years ago, when we had no press at all’ and when the Kölnische Zeitung, ‘the most widely spread paper of the province, was merely a harmless collection of novelties of the day’. Kruse’s point, in spelling out the implications of ‘editorial change’ on 1 April 1855, was that the press was now much more significant. He went on to advance an equally independent line of argument during the Franco-Austrian war of 1859, hinting that the Habsburg monarchy was pursuing a war for its own ends, not those of ‘Europe’. ‘Germany’ should ‘remain vigilant and arm itself’, ready to enter a ‘German war’, if one should break out. Elben followed a similar line, ‘not for Austria, not against Italy, but, if the German hereditary enemy [France] interferes again, against it and for Germany!’

What picture or pictures of war did the Schwäbischer Merkur, Kölnische Zeitung, and other publications propagate and how might readers have interpreted them? ‘Public opinion’, which was discussed extensively in the mid-nineteenth century, was not to be equated with the press, as one article on ‘die öffentliche Meinung’ in the Catholic Historisch-politische Blätter reminded its readership in 1848: it was a ‘great and profound misconception’ amongst private individuals and in government to ‘hold public opinion to be a product of recent times’ or to be interchangeable with the press. Instead, it referred to ‘the whole Volk’, describing the point at which ‘many individuals judge something in the same way at the same time’ so that ‘an agreement of judgement, a kind of general judgement (Gesammturtheil) results, either in individual or wider circles or even in whole lands, irrespective of the existing means of mental communication’. Such agreement did not imply that a single ‘public opinion’ obtained, invalidating unqualified injunctions for governments to enlist ‘public opinion on its side’, since ‘within the educated and reading world opinions on many issues are divided and not all are sufficiently represented by the press’, continued the Bavarian periodical. Beyond the educated world of readers, ‘the non-reading classes’ had their own views and prejudices, which were more difficult to gauge and to influence: ‘Each [the group of readers

63 Ibid., 47. 64 Ibid., 73, 77.
66 Ibid., 236. 67 Kölnische Zeitung, 1 May 1859, ibid., vol. 4, 96.
68 Ibid. 69 O. Elben, Geschichte des Schwäbischen Merkurs, 91.
71 Ibid. 72 Ibid., 596.
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and non-readers] is a world in itself; different ideas are in circulation in each; the exchange of ideas is mediated in different ways in each, with word of mouth, rumour, and jokes being more central to one than the other. Nevertheless, the very occasion for the article in the Historisch-politische Blätter, which was more critical of what it called ‘the bad press’ and which was sympathetic to governments’ need to thwart or eliminate excesses, was a perceived transformation of the means of communication, opinion formation, and governance, in which ‘the most important means for the circulation of ideas, the easiest and most quickly effective’, was, ‘in truth, the press’. As such, it was ‘to be treated as a great power, which admittedly only has a direct effect on a small part of the population but which affects all classes indirectly’, the article went on: ‘What the reading public thinks, believes and desires metamorphoses over a certain period into the juices and life of the Volk and completes, like blood, its circulation of the entire organism.’ Governments had come to rely on the press as a forum for the articulation of public opinion, which was needed to achieve public goods such as the provision of financial ‘credit’. Thus, they could no longer view ‘public opinion as an unjustified interference of the public in public affairs’, nor could they put themselves ‘in tow to public opinion’, either by setting up ‘an unworthy, dishonest system of spies and agents’ or by subjecting themselves to ‘the terrorism of those who claim, by crying the loudest, to represent the most powerful public opinion’. In practice, the governments of most German states, in contrast to that in Austria, had availed themselves of limited, justified censorship to control the worst elements of the press at the same time as encouraging—via education and appeals to culture—the best elements, the article concluded. In an era of international crisis and war such as that between 1848 and 1871, it was expected that the best elements would prevail, with newspapers and periodicals informing subjects objectively and responsibly of the serious matters at hand.

There are many indications that readers took a close interest in military conflicts and looked to the press to relay the ‘facts’. Wars abroad led to increased sales for popular and liberal publications. In Vienna, Die Presse had seen its subscriptions increase from 15,000 in 1850 to 30,000 in 1854–6 and 38,000 in 1859, before dropping to 25,000 by 1865. Although growing less dramatically, since the other German states were not implicated in hostilities, the circulation of newspapers such as the Allgemeine Zeitung, which had fallen from 11,155 to 7,064 between 1848 and 1851, revived during the Crimean and Franco-Austrian wars. At the height of the conflicts in Schleswig-Holstein, Crimea, and northern Italy, newspapers reported daily from ‘the scene of the war’, relying on telegraphs to pass on news as quickly as possible: at the start of the Crimean campaign, for example, it took five days for news to reach London (two days by steamship from Balaklava to Varna, three by horse to Bucharest, where the nearest telegraph was), from where

73 Ibid. 74 Ibid., 598, 601. 75 Ibid., 598. 76 Ibid., 597. 77 See, for example, the robust defence of the Allgemeine Zeitung, 16 Oct. 1853, of its reporting of the ‘facts’. 78 K. Paupié, Handbuch der österreichischen Pressegeschichte, vol. 1, 136. 79 E. Heyck, Die Allgemeine Zeitung, 126.
it was cabled directly by WTB to Berlin and the rest of Germany. By the end of 1854, the French had linked Varna to Bucharest by telegraph, reducing the delivery time to two days, followed by the laying of an underwater cable by the British from Balaklava to Varna, so that news could reach London and the rest of Europe within hours. The speed of such communication created its own problems, with a time lag between short telegraphic bulletins and longer reports travelling by post, which arrived a week or two later from the Crimea and, even, Italy and a month or so later from the United States. Thus, the alleged defeat of Russia at Sevastopol on 2 October 1854—more than ten months before the event—was widely reported on the basis of telegraphs about an Allied victory at the Alma, which were not clarified and corrected fully until William Howard Russell’s report reached The Times on 10 October. After the Austrian defeat at Solferino on 24 June 1859, there was an eleven-day delay, punctuated by Die Presse’s regular complaints that ‘detailed news about the great and bloody event of war are still missing’ (28 June), until reliable information arrived ‘from our own correspondent at military headquarters’ (4 July).

It seems likely, however, that the speed and immediacy of the reportage helped to captivate readers, who weighed up for themselves the variety of sources—the War Ministry, commanders, officers, ordinary soldiers, civilians, foreign or war correspondents, other publications at home and abroad—that newspapers were anxious to evaluate and confirm. Journalists assumed that their readership would be familiar with the intricate details of a campaign—‘the general course of the battle… will already be known to you from the newspapers’—even in the case of the American Civil War, which was covered less intensively. Occasionally, they pointed out ‘that no branch of literature’ was handled ‘as ruthlessly as daily newspapers’, which were discarded like old household implements, and they voiced doubts that war correspondents, who were still relatively rare—Wickede being one of the best known in Germany—were guilty of sensationalizing or falsifying the events of a conflict in their desperation to produce interesting copy, but most of them were content to go on feeding a popular hunger for war reports.

80 O. Figes, Crimea (London, 2010), 305. See also S. Kaufmann, Kommunikationstechnik und Kriegführung 1815–1945 (Munich, 1996).
82 Ibid.
83 Die Presse, 28 June and 4 July 1859.
84 One correspondent of Die Allgemeine Zeitung, 2 May 1849, was typical of a general concern to confirm the veracity of his report, ‘writing down in pencil the oral description of the German officers and soldiers’.
86 ‘Berliner Bilder. Bürgerliche Kriegsbereitschaft’, Gartenlaube, 1859, vol. 24, 345; Grenzbote, 1850, vol. 9, no. 4, 681–5: there were war reporters in Schleswig-Holstein but their number was small. The first celebrated war reporters were associated with the Crimean War, particularly William Russell, who worked for The Times. The number of ‘war correspondents’ in the American Civil War was much greater, estimated at 500, yet the circumstances of a civil war were different, allowing American journalists and writers who usually worked in other fields to follow the fighting more easily.
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Contemporaries’ appetites were stimulated by the novel, visual representation of conflicts in the press from the 1840s onwards. The Crimean War was the first major campaign to be caught on film, with about fifteen photographers from Britain (Roger Fenton, James Robertson), France (Jean-Baptiste-Henri Durand Brager, George Lefèvre Shaw, Jean-Charles Langlois), Italy (Felice Beato), and Russia taking several thousand images of officers, soldiers, camp life, and battlefields, yet few contemporaries in the German lands saw them at the time, since they could not be reproduced in the press and they were not published in German books.87 Ten years later, the American Civil War was much more extensively photographed, with up to 1 million images taken. Some were transposed by cohorts of illustrators—Harper’s Weekly and the Illustrated Weekly alone had eighty on their payroll—and others appeared in popular albums such as Timonthy O’Sullivan’s A Harvest of Death and Alexander Gardner’s Photographic Sketch Book of the War.88 However, these images, too, made little impression on the mainstream German press. Photography—including, by the 1860s, images of the Crimean War—was one of several sources available to magazine illustrators, along with the various traditions of military painting, but its effect—particularly its gritty, unflinching realism—was limited until the mid-1860s.89

By comparison, the newly developing conventions of magazine illustration visible in the Leipzig Illustrierte Zeitung (founded in 1843) and Gartenlaube (1853), which focused on exotic landscapes, maps, scenes from daily life, portraiture, and anthropological typologies, were much more important, combined with longer-standing examples of war albums by Albrecht Adam and Christian Wilhelm Faber du Faur, which had revealed the individual suffering and death of the Napoleonic campaigns.90 Der Weg zwischen Balaklava und dem englischen Lager, which appeared in the Gartenlaube in 1855, resembled paintings such as Adam’s Auf der Straße nach Moskau 8. September 1812 (1827) and Faber du Faur’s Die Brücke über die Kolotscha bei Borodino, den 17. September 1812 (1831–43) (see Figure 5.1).91 Französische Scharfschützen in ihren Feldschanzen, which was published in the same periodical at the end of 1854, showed French soldiers firing from entrenched positions as if

89 S. Parth, Zwischen Bildbericht und Bildpropaganda, 242–52.
90 Ibid., 252–61. For the effects of illustrated and Familienzeitschriften on newspapers, see E.-A. Kirschstein, Die Familienzeitschrift, 131–45. See also Chapters 4 and 5.
91 Gartenlaube, 1855, vol. 10, 137. S. Parth, Bildberichte, 258–9.
the impression that they were close to the war and the fighting. The images were juxta-positioned in the press with graphic correspondence and memoirs, which stood alongside the miscellany of nineteenth-century reportage. How significant such representations were—as a means of assessing their impact on subjects’ readiness to go to war—is the subject of the following sections.

**THE GERMAN STRUGGLE FOR SCHLESWIG-HOLSTEIN IN 1848–51**

The military campaigns of Prussia and the Bund against Denmark involved small numbers of troops, but they had the potential to become a popular ‘German’ war on behalf of a beleaguered national population and territory against a traditional enemy. Jahn had termed the Low Countries and Denmark in their entirety a ‘Nordreich’, anticipating their eventual inclusion in a greater German nation-state.94 The so-called ‘Kiel circle’ of academics, which included Dahlmann and

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Karl Theodor Welcker, had helped to establish the idea that Schleswig was a ‘German’ land, connected by legal, linguistic, and institutional ties to Holstein and therefore—since the Duchy was a confederal territory—to the German Bund. In 1815, Dahlmann, who had been born in Wismar under Swedish rule in 1785 but who was a professor at Kiel University between 1812 and 1828, remarked:

Even if the people of Schleswig have never been in the German Confederation, they belong to it through their brothers, the people of Holstein, to whom they have extended the hand of friendship over the centuries and with whom they are most intimately united in their constitution, their liberties and their rights… May they [the people of Schleswig and Holstein] grasp each other’s hand more firmly still.95

National claims and the call for an autonomous Schleswig-Holstein remained limited in scope and resonance, however, until the late 1840s. Under the conditions of the ‘restoration’, conceded Welcker in the Kieler Blätter, ‘our national aspirations will now have to become more or less provincial… so that in general the Germans will have to seek that which is good and true in the special circumstances of their own locality’.96 In the circumstances of the two duchies, with a handful of nationalists putting forward a case for the incorporation of Schleswig in Denmark or the German Confederation by the 1840s, both liberals and conservatives continued to believe that some form of autonomy within the constitutional arrangements of the Helstat, which itself had been granted by and fell under the prerogative of the Danish crown, permitted the maintenance of necessary historical, legal, and cultural linkages between the two territories. Even to a German nationalist like Droysen, who founded what became the Neue Kieler Blätter (originally bearing the historian’s preferred title of the Norddeutsche Blätter) and who taught students such as Karl Samwer, Lorenz Stein, and Theodor Mommsen at Kiel in the 1840s, a personal dynastic union with Denmark remained acceptable until 1848. Outside the duchies, the cause of Schleswig-Holstein became known to a wider German public from the mid-1840s onwards, with the song ‘Schleswig-Holstein meerumschlungen’ achieving popularity after the Würzburg festival of 1845, yet the complicated issues involved were barely understood until the eve of the revolution: the Allgemeine Zeitung was one of the first German publications to examine them in depth in a series of articles, to which so-called ‘Eider Danes’—who favoured extending Denmark’s border to the river Eider—also contributed, in 1845 and 1846.97 Consequently, when the question became a pressing national one, after King Frederik VII of Denmark had announced his intention of annexing Schleswig on 21 March 1848, in order to appease Danish nationalists and forestall the full independence of the Duchy (along with Holstein), many German commentators could be found seeking answers and fashioning policies more or less from scratch.

Initially, there was broad support for the ‘national’ resistance of Schleswig and Holstein—or, at least, that of elites and other sections of the population of the

95 Ibid., 55. 96 Kieler Blätter, vol. 2, cited ibid., 45.
97 Allgemeine Zeitung, 1845, nos 2828, 297, 359, 360; 1846, nos 12, 43, 59, 66, 95, 96, 121, Ibid., 239.
The main towns—against Danish aggression, after calling for assistance from the Bund and replacing the red, white, and blue flags of the duchies with the black, red, and gold ones of liberal ‘Germany’. With Frederik VII still a minor, ran the commentaries of the German press, it was not legitimate to try to banish doubts over his succession in Schleswig and Holstein by means of annexation. The estates of Schleswig-Holstein, meeting in Rendsburg on 18 March, had called for a separate constitution for the duchies and for Schleswig to join Holstein in the German Confederation. A provisional government had been set up by conservatives, national liberals, and radicals on 23 March in order to protect the rights of the duchies against the ‘unfree duke’, who had been constrained, as King of Denmark, by Danish nationalists. ‘With all our might and main we associate ourselves with the German struggle for unity and freedom,’ ran the provisional government’s proclamation, written by Droysen: ‘Let us show the German fatherland by our staunch demeanour and dignified bearing that the spirit of true patriotism fills the hearts of those who live in Schleswig-Holstein.’ Prompted by his old student friend from Bonn Christian August, the Duke of Augustenburg, who was a contender in the succession to the duchies, Friedrich Wilhelm IV, issued a proclamation on 24 March pledging Prussia’s support for the duchies against a Danish attack in accordance with the Confederation’s decision in September 1846. On 12 April, the Bundesversammlung, which had previously recognized the provisional government of Schleswig-Holstein, as had other German states, declared that the war between Denmark, the duchies, and Prussia, which had begun at the end of March, was a Bundeskrieg, involving Germany as a whole, through the Confederation. Accordingly, the Tenth Federal Army Corps, with troops from Hanover, Mecklenburg, Oldenburg, Brunswick, and the Hansa cities, was deployed alongside the Prussian army. The Provisional Central Power and the National Assembly established by revolutionaries in Frankfurt formally endorsed the conflict as a ‘German’ or ‘Reich’ war. Deputies from both Schleswig and Holstein were elected in May to the Frankfurt National Assembly, despite the fact that the former territory lay outside the old Confederation. Dahllmann made their case to the newly gathered Frankfurt Parliament on 9 June, to applause from all sides of the chamber: ‘The balance of power in Europe may be upset, but if what is right does not occur in the matter of Schleswig, the German business itself will have been defeated.’ Germans, he went on, would continue the fight ‘until the last drop of blood has streamed out of us’. After Prussia, under pressure from Britain and Russia, unilaterally ended the war with the truce of Malmö on 26 August 1848, in contravention of the Central Power’s conditions, the same deputies in the Frankfurt Parliament objected strongly, rejecting Berlin’s action by 238 votes to 221 in early September, even though General Friedrich von Wrangel, the Prussian commander of all German
troops in Schleswig-Holstein, had already begun a withdrawal. Those on the left such as Jakob Venedey contended that the diplomacy of the Great Powers, doing deals separately with the German princes—in this case Friedrich Wilhelm IV—had been characteristic of the years after the ‘humiliating peace’ of Westphalia in 1648: history had proved that—in order to avoid repeated humiliations, of which Malmö was the most recent instance—‘we need to create a new Reich, that we must create it even at the risk of entering into a war with the entire world in order to become a single, united Germany’.103 For his part, the radical Carl Vogt criticized Prussia for being ‘dragged along by Russia’ and recalled the successful defence of French revolutionaries against enemies on all sides during the 1790s.104 These calls for a renunciation of Berlin’s actions seemed to correspond to the Central Power’s expression of dissatisfaction on 3 September:

It is evident that Prussia, by concluding the present treaty, has overstepped its powers and that the Central Power, as the contracting party, as well as third powers can take on no responsibilities vis-à-vis Prussia before the approval of the Reich government is given. This can only be given by the Central Power as a result of a decision of the National Assembly.105

However, the resignation of the Reich ministry of Prince Karl von Leiningen after parliamentarians’ vote against the withdrawal of troops from Schleswig-Holstein and the subsequent failure of Dahlmann, who was against the truce, to form a government led to a volte-face in the National Assembly, with 258 deputies versus 237 voting against a continuation of the war on 16 September. Despite the demonstration of at least 15,000 people on the Pfingstweide in Frankfurt, followed by the erection of barricades in the centre of the city, liberal deputies had already indicated in the debates and votes of 5 and 16 September that they backed a ceasefire: the centre–right ‘Casino’ faction voted by eighty-nine to twelve in favour on the first occasion and by 103 to nine on the second; the constitutional–liberal ‘Landsberg’ faction by thirty-four to five and thirty-nine to four; and the independents by fifty-nine to forty and sixty-eight to thirty-five.106 To whistles from the left of the chamber, Arndt himself, who had been elected as the voice of Germany’s national struggle since 1813, argued for peace on the grounds that deputies were so divided on the issue as to be unable to form a government and that the Danes, as a ‘fraternal tribe’ would respect the terms of the treaty.107 All such actions demonstrated that liberals—supported by the right, who voted for a ‘Prussian’ ceasefire by 30 to 0 and 33 to 0—were not willing to prosecute the war in Schleswig-Holstein at the expense of the domestic purposes of the revolution.108 Their stance was in keeping with a press response in Germany to the war in the

104 Ibid., 2094.
108 W. Ribhegge, Das Parlament als Nation, 85.
duchies which was supportive but muted, with newspaper coverage often eclipsed by a preoccupation with revolutionary events at home. This proclivity was reinforced during the second phase of the conflict between April and July 1849, after the truce had come to an end on 23 February, and during the third between July 1850 and April 1851. The Catholic Historisch-politische Blätter, which was published in Munich, did not devote a single article to the war during the entire period.109

Other newspapers and periodicals, including conservative ones, paid more attention to events in Schleswig-Holstein, but they tended to treat them like the strategic manoeuvres of a cabinet war. The fact that the contingents of troops from each state were small—with 64,000 men overall on the side of the Confederation in 1848, 82,000 in 1849, and only 28,000 defending Schleswig-Holstein at the start of 1850, according to one correspondent of the Grenzboten—encouraged this proclivity.110 For conservative publications, which had warned of the dangers of unbridled nationalism and a neglect of the realities of Great Power politics from the start, such reportage seemed natural. The unrealistic ‘German’ dreams of Frankfurt had come to nothing, gloated the Kreuzzeitung, since Prussia alone had been in a position to defend Schleswig-Holstein in March 1848, which it had done on behalf of the Bund, not the subsequently formed Provisional Central Power, National Assembly, or Reich.111 Because ‘the whole of Germany except Prussia’ had fallen into ‘defenceless impotence’ at the commencement of the conflict, it was now up to Friedrich Wilhelm IV and his government to decide whether to agree a ceasefire in accordance with their evaluation of the policies of the other Great Powers.112 There was little mention in the conservative press of casualties and killing, nor in unaligned newspapers which were further from government circles such as the Königlich-priviligirte Berlinische Zeitung (known also as the Vossische Zeitung).

Here, the correspondence of soldiers and ‘reliable’ local sources was relayed, as well as that of the government and army, but only passing references were made to blood-letting, which was usually linked to the attainment of military goals: thus, as ‘His Majesty’s troops’ achieved ‘possession of the whole fixed position before the town of Schleswig’, reported the newspaper on 26 April 1848, they met with a ‘bloody encounter’, about which no further details were given.113 The style of much of the reporting was characteristic of a military dispatch:

One wanted on the 23rd only to advance against the Danish positions. However, during the march, General Wrangel decided to carry out a decisive attack on Schleswig itself. Whilst the avant-garde itself now attacked Schleswig, where the Danes continued to hold the fort of Gottorp, the position of the Danes was at the same time outflanked on the western side, upon which they gave up Gottorp and retreated to

109 On the general proclivities of the periodical, see K.-H. Lucas, Joseph Edmund Jörg. Konservative Publizistik zwischen Revolution und Reichsgründung 1852–1871 (Diss., Cologne, 1969). The same was true of the satirical magazine Kladderadatsch, which concentrated on domestic affairs and other aspects of foreign policy.

110 Grenzboten, 1850, vol. 9, no. 4, 683.

111 Neue preussische Zeitung, 13 and 14 Sept. 1848.

112 Ibid.

113 Königlich-priviligirte Berlinische Zeitung, 26 Apr. 1848.
Flensburg. The Prussian avant-garde took Königswill on the evening of the 23rd. The fighting lasted three hours and was very lively *(lebhaft)*. The Danes fought bravely.114

Two days later, Wrangel’s own report was printed, passing on details of troop movements in a similar vein: “The pursuit of the Danes was continued on the 24th, and the avant-garde was composed of troops of the 10th [Federal] Corps (especially Hanoverians and Braunschweiger) in order to give them the opportunity to take part in the honour of fighting.”115 “The rear-guard consisted of Danish hussars and *Jäger,*” the same article went on:

The Hanoverian hussars captured the enemy’s regimental commander, several officers and 80 men and took control of their banner; the Braunschw. *Jäger* forced the Danish defence opposite them, after their heroic counter-fire under Hauptmann von Schafenberg, to lay down their arms. The fighting stopped at this point. It was too late to reach Flensburg, especially since the troops of the 10th Corps had just put five miles behind them in unrelenting rain. Bivouacs were put up and the attack on Flensburg was set for the next day, the 25th.116

Local correspondence was interspersed with that of the military, giving a more immediate sense of the conflict but barely diverging from the official narrative:

The following report from the war front came to us from a reliable source in Rendsburg at 10 o’clock in the evening on 25 April—I am now entering Rendsburg and learn on registering my arrival with the Provisional Government [of Schleswig-Holstein] that the Prussians have already taken the city of Flensburg at 10 o’clock this morning. The Danes have been chased out completely and the route to their ships via Holnis cut off; if they have not got onto the water at Apenrade, they will be found by our troops and, hopefully, be completely destroyed. . . . . Apart from small individual contingents of troops from Holstein, the Prussians were again alone on the battlefield and have been gloriously victorious.117

The assumption that Prussia, and therefore ‘Germany’, would win this relatively small war with ease characterized much of the reportage in the conservative press during 1848.

Correspondents of liberal newspapers were less blasé about the aims and outcome of the war in Schleswig, but they, too, frequently overlooked its bloodshed. In southern Germany (but not in Austria), liberals were, if one correspondent in the *Allgemeine Zeitung* were to be believed, more enthusiastic about the conflict precisely because they were less directly implicated in it and, therefore, had less to lose.118 “The war with Denmark is comprehended here in the North from a

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114 Ibid.  
115 Ibid., 28 Apr. 1848.  
116 Ibid.  
117 Ibid.  
118 *Allgemeine Zeitung*, 6 Sept. 1848, 3977. *Die Presse* (Vienna), 12 Sept. 1848, by contrast, was scathing: ‘Nothing has been so overexploited theoretically and so hollowed out by democratic phrases as this Schleswig-Holstein business’. Since Schleswig had not, before March 1848, belonged to the *Bund*, despite its historical union with Holstein, the ‘one-sided incorporation’ of Schleswig in the Confederation by means of arms was, with some justification, seen by Denmark, Russia, and England as a ‘war of conquest’. The Viennese newspaper treated the question of Schleswig-Holstein peripherally and exclusively as a matter of high politics.
completely different point of view than in the South as an unjust and, on the whole, senseless one,’ wrote one ‘traveller’ in ‘the German North’ on 6 September 1848: ‘Many families have relations, often sons, on both sides, as in the case of people personally known to me. Thus, their interests are thoroughly divided and there is little trace of the enthusiasm which exists amongst us [in the South]’. Like their counterparts elsewhere, South German liberals were critical of conservatives—‘the party which now wants peace at any price’, as the Allgemeine Zeitung put it in August 1848—who were more concerned ‘not to bring the Danes to a point of desperation’ than to avoid driving the Schleswig-Holsteiner to despair and provoking an ‘unpredictable war’, instead of establishing peace. The conflict was at once a legal and a national one, ‘not at all just a war of nationalities, but also a war of defence on the side of a loyal, German Schleswig-Holstein for the male line of the house of Oldenburg’. It was a question not merely of money, rendering redundant the Hansa cities’ claim that they had already lost ‘many more millions than Schleswig is worth’, but a matter ‘of the honour, of the existence of Germany and the German princes’: ‘it is morally impossible that Schleswig-Holstein again be brought under Danish jurisdiction’, for it would create such poor conditions that they would ‘become the cause of a new war’. ‘The Prussian, the Hanoverian fighters, the warriors of the Hansa cities and those from the Rhine were not fighting alone in Schleswig, not mainly for Schleswig, but for the defence of the left bank of the Rhine,’ declared the Allgemeine Zeitung on 18 August. Although ‘it is true that we respected the enemy too little at the beginning of the German–Danish war’, the national war was worth waging, with ‘tens of thousands of good Germans ready [to give] their blood for a part of Germany’. It was better to have ‘either peace, as will soon occur, or war in God’s name against any enemy’ rather than ‘this indeterminate, in-between stage, which has the evil consequences of war for all of us, without being war, allowing the soldiers, who come ready to fight, to despair of their own strength’. Accordingly, the same newspaper supported deputies’ rejection of the Malmö ceasefire on 5 September, citing Dahlmann’s speech approvingly, and it went on to back the National Assembly’s acceptance of a truce on 16 September, calling on the moderate conservative deputy Georg von Vincke as a witness that the truce’s terms exceeded Germany’s original war aims—the prevention of Danish annexation—and that the Provisional Central Power had no means to impose a more humiliating peace on its opponent. It was ‘practical’ to end a war which, because of Prussia’s unilateral withdrawal and the machinations of the other Great Powers, had become ‘costly’ and ‘unnavigable’. Despite adopting a very different stance from that of conservatives and portraying a national war undermined by neighbouring states, South

119 Allgemeine Zeitung, 6 Sept. 1848.  120 Ibid., 18 Aug. 1848, 3693.
121 Ibid., 3692.  122 Ibid.  123 Ibid.  124 Ibid.
127 Ibid., 12, Sept. 1848. The issue also recorded that news of Prussia’s ceasefire landed ‘like a bomb’ in the Frankfurt Parliament.
German liberals—like deputies and observers on the right—generally perceived the conflict in abstract political and diplomatic terms in 1848. As the conflict was reignited in April 1849, with confederal forces—including Prussians—under the command of the Prussian officer Eduard von Bonin, southern German liberal publications like the Allgemeine Zeitung began to focus on the actual fighting rather than on political manoeuvring, not least because it now appeared possible that the war would be lost. Consequently, the outbreak of fighting was marked by disbelief and foreboding:

The Danes have really started hostilities! News has just arrived, which I am sharing with you as fully certain, that the Danes, coming over from Alsen at 3, attacked outposts in the Sundewitt'schen, drew the entire Third Jäger Corps into battle and have bombarded it violently with artillery. The loss on our side from the rather tough fighting amounts to 17 wounded and one dead.

‘Our young troops’ could only withdraw from the fighting ‘with difficulty’, preceded by ‘very many refugees, especially officials’. Large numbers of soldiers and guns—sixty pieces of artillery, Bavarians, Hanoverians, three battalions of Prussians, and 6,000 Saxons—had already been seen making their way north to the fighting front, reported witnesses in worried ignorance. Nonetheless, the Allgemeine Zeitung’s coverage focused on German victories at Eckernförde on 5 April, where batteries built by Werner von Siemens incapacitated Danish warships—with a loss of over 100 dead, sixty injured, and 1,000 taken prisoner—as they attempted to land troops and form a bridgehead, and at Kolding on 23 April, as Schleswig-Holstein’s troops attacked and took control of a town harbouring the famous Danish nationalist—‘the lunatic fanatic’—Orla Lehmann.

On the first occasion, ‘the town of Eckernförde suffered a lot’, as ‘the thunder of the guns’ in the afternoon could be heard ‘in a radius miles wide, in Schleswig, Rendsburg and even Kiel’. On the second occasion, which was ‘one of the most violent and bloodiest instances of fighting’ with ‘the character of a battle’, Kolding’s population fled and buildings were set ablaze, as the Danes incurred a ‘very significant loss’ of 800 dead, wounded, and taken prisoner, compared to 400 ‘on the German side’, including ‘many volunteers from the best families of the land’. Such losses did not lead to a reconsideration of the war’s purpose, but were the result of ‘this shameful, unnatural hatred’ of Danes against ‘a kindred Volk’ of

129 Allgemeine Zeitung, 10 Apr. 1849.
130 Ibid., 9 Apr. 1849.
131 Ibid.
132 Ibid., 11 Apr. 1849, 1542–3.
133 Ibid., 2 May 1849, 1877.
Germans in Holstein and Schleswig. They were the consequence of the courage of ‘our brave soldiers’, who faced the attacks of the Danes with their bayonets:

‘Forwards! Forwards!’ cried the fiery volunteers and they ran at an attacking pace against the Danes, who soon emerged everywhere from the smoke. The street battle lasted nearly an hour. Although very bitter at the cowardly murderers who, secure in the rear, shot down many German fighters from behind, they still spared their life.135

This and other reports helped to perpetuate a narrative of an heroic, romantic struggle—with ‘the setting of Kolding even more picturesque than that of Eckernförde’—against a familiar and similar enemy:

The brave Jäger…, the dragoons with their shining steel helmets, the handsome martial figures of the Tann‘schen Freiwilligen from the Ninth Battalion—they make good use today of the looted casks of wine, they sing and laugh and look so fresh, so good-natured, so ready for battle that the first day of fighting could have been a mere happy gymnastic exercise. In addition, it is finally nice weather again!136

The same narrative was maintained in the unsuccessful campaigns of 1850, as a purported 29,000 troops of Schleswig-Holstein faced 43,000 Danes (and an army of 60,000, according to the testimony of prisoners of war) at the battle of Idstedt (24–25 July), in ‘a quite terrible bloodbath’, leaving a rumoured 10,000 corpses on the battlefield and leading to the troops’ expulsion from Schleswig.137 Even then, the ‘mood of the army’ was said to be ‘outstanding’, with ‘no man… downhearted about the mishap near Idstedt’.138 Much was made of the ‘fact’ that the Danes, who had also fought heroically, had suffered ‘more than double the number of dead and wounded’ of the army of Schleswig-Holstein.139 It was sad ‘that Germany could not uphold the rights of the duchies in two successful wars’, not least because it had lacked sufficient ‘feeling for its honour and power’, wrote a correspondent of the Allgemeine Zeitung from the Baltic Sea on 31 July 1850, but Schleswig-Holstein would in future be able ‘to fight for its position vis-à-vis Denmark on its own’.140

North German liberals were frequently less sanguine about the prospects of war and more critical of Prussia, Frankfurt, and the Great Powers than their counterparts in the South. They were also closer to the fighting and, particularly in periodicals, gave a more individual account of the wars. ‘The daily press has done its duty’, laying bare the conditions of the ceasefire, which was a cause of ‘shame’, and ‘criticizing it from a party-political standpoint’, wrote one commentator in the Grenzboten in 1849.141 Neither Prussia nor the Bund had acted consistently, failing to exploit the circumstance that Denmark had provoked the war, in order to make the duchies ‘German’: ‘The war was waged by us to make a united Schleswig-Holstein into German states.’142 Notwithstanding the ‘repeated question’ of

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135 Ibid. Also, ibid., 29 Apr. 1849, on the verification and denial of ‘excesses’.
136 Ibid. See also ibid., 17 Apr. 1849, which also described an idyllic, bucolic landscape in detail.
137 Ibid., 29 July 1850, 3348–9. Also, ibid., 11 Oct. 1850, 4530.
138 Ibid., 31 July 1850, 3381. 139 Ibid., 3 Aug. 1850, 3428.
139 Ibid., 31 July 1850, 3381.
141 Ibid., 216.
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conservative newspapers in the Hohenzollern monarchy as to whether and how 'the war could have been conducted differently', the Prussian government had 'rightly' received 'the bitter reproaches of the German press' for refusing to oversee the construction of 'our naval forces', for electing not to hold out 'until the end of the winter' and for failing to provide 'an energetic overarching command', preferring to pursue 'its own egotistical advantage and that of its citizens' and to take up 'the struggle for a national interest...half-heartedly'.143 Most liberal publications agreed with the Grenzboten that the population of the duchies 'only wants to be German'; 'the majority, not only of a head count, but also of the educated, the majority of education, is in Schleswig-Holstein decisively German'.144 What was more, Denmark—it was widely held in such circles—had merely the 'appearance of an independent state' and would not be able to coexist with a strong, unified Germany:

How would one partition? According to sympathies and antipathies? That is not possible, for only a small part will want to become Danes.... Or according to language? The language which is spoken in the northern districts can be called Danish as little as it can be called German; it is a poor bastard.145

Whereas German Schleswiger were 'chained to Holstein through the links of the law, all state institutions, the material interests of trade, and so on, Danish Schleswiger are connected to Denmark through none of these things', went on the periodical.146 The Kölnische Zeitung concurred that 'church, school, law and administration, in a word, the whole state, is German', and that 'the educated and propertied in the entire land are almost exclusively German'.147 Other liberal newspapers made similar claims.148 These 'German' populations had been let down and a broader national mission had been neglected by Prussia, the states of the Confederation, and the new Reich government in Frankfurt.

Much of the Grenzboten's reportage focused on the war from the perspective of national volunteers, of which there were said to be about 4,000 by 1850.149 From the very beginning of the conflict, such soldiers were imagined to be 'free fighters' (Freischärler), living in the open and defending a cause which they believed in.150 'There might be no more enjoyable, carefree life than that of a mounted soldier (reisiger Landsknecht)!' wrote one correspondent in 1848:

The whole of Germany had contributed to the completion of the colourful palette of volunteer corps (Freischen).... Here, there are bearded jäger and mounted game-keepers in green hats and with wonderful guns; there, there are black, red and gold students armed with rusting muskets and huge swords—and amongst them young lads for whom their father's rod was perhaps too severe—former assistants of merchants and fashionable barbers' helpers who in the plenitude of their own power had advanced to become doctors of medicine—schoolteachers for whom a posting came

143 Ibid., 220–1. 144 Ibid., 1848, 496. The article is dated 23 June.
145 Ibid., 1848, 217, 357. 146 Ibid., 355. 147 Kölnische Zeitung, 12 Apr. 1848.
148 For instance, National-Zeitung, 14 May 1848.
149 'Vom Schleswig-holsteinschen Heere', Grenzboten, 1850, vol. 9, no. 4, 682.
along too late — . . . also quite a few simple folk from the land . . . — in short, all strata were thrown together in the most colourful mishmash. Nationalities here were practically submerged in a single German unity—but was it the sense of a German nationality which had brought all these free fighters together in these northern duchies—who can say? Many, especially the educated, the intelligentsia, had certainly been led on by their enthusiasm for the thing, others by a thirst for action typical of youth, which great times powerfully awake; most, however, came for no other reason than to follow an inclination for adventure or because their reckoning with society had been brought to an end. Thus, the most heterogeneous elements were pushed together in tight circles here so that quite often one feared fights breaking out between them. There was no shortage of frictions—but I must say, to the honour of the Schleswig-Holstein volunteer corps, the good element was almost always the dominant one, and the tendency towards roughness and excess, which threatened to develop in many, given any opportunity, was mostly snuffed out powerfully through the influence of the educated majority. The spirit which animated everybody was thus a satisfying one, on the whole, and I confess that I spent happy days in the midst of my comrades, days the memory of which will never pale in my heart.151

Following the legend of Freiwillige in 1813, the volunteers proved valuable, even though they lacked ‘discipline in the sense of the machine of the military of the line’, barely understanding how to ‘form a front and to distinguish right from left’ but knowing how to shoot, to use the bayonet, and shout ‘hurrah’.152 The relationship between volunteers and regular soldiers was strained, with Prussian officers calling them ‘bandits’, but the different bands of fighters—the largest group being Berliners composed of revolutionaries ‘from the barricades’ and middle-class men in black coats and gloves—got on well together and were capable of decisive military actions.153 At Eckernförde, the same correspondent saw ‘eighty Berliners, all of them men of the barricades from the days of March, as they called themselves in self-satisfaction, and armed with muskets from the royal arsenal, as they stormed the enemy with bayonets’, having discharged their guns at a distance of a thousand paces. The Danes ‘could have completely massacred the madly courageous small group, tired out from running’, but they were so ‘astonished and overcome’, once their first volley had been aimed too high and done no damage, that they ‘suddenly turned around . . . and began to run’.154 Descriptions of similar actions—with volunteers compared to the ‘adventurous figures’ of an ‘attack by robbers’ in ‘the weak light of the moon’ in one report—were common in liberal and other periodicals during 1848–50.155

As the fortunes of the war changed in 1850, with the army of Schleswig-Holstein, including its German volunteers, left to fight Denmark alone, reporters modified the tone but not the style or content of their accounts, shielding readers from the harsher realities of combat. Many days were ‘quite desperately boring’, made up of guard duty on the one-and-a-quarter-mile-wide strip along the border between Schleswig and Holstein, which ‘unfortunately is all that we have kept hold of’,
and interspersed with ‘episodes’ of action which ‘help to fill the time’, as one article ‘from an open-air camp in the field’ put it.\footnote{\textit{Aus Schleswig-Holstein}, ibid., 1850, vol. 9, no. 3, 433.} The ‘situation of Schleswig-Holstein and therefore of its army have very few encouraging prospects’, noted the same article in 1850, even if the good morale of the troops had ‘not entirely disappeared’.\footnote{Ibid., 435.} The most that could be said was that ‘the decision to give the last worldly good and drop of blood in order to fight for an honourable peace’ had become ‘firmer and more unshakeable’ than ever, recorded another article in the \textit{Grenzboten} a few weeks later: ‘If the humiliating circumstances of 1850 in Germany are written down in the eternal annals of history, Schleswig-Holstein’s page should remain untouched by dirt and shame.’\footnote{\textit{vom schleswig-holsteinschen Heere}, ibid., no. 4, 681.} The author was not able to provide ‘happy news of victory, for the bloody days of Missunde and Friedrichstadt remained without successes’, with the ‘two bloody fights’ together costing ‘us’ almost 700 soldiers, ‘dead, wounded or captured’.\footnote{Ibid.} Each time, ‘we had to fight under the most unfavourable conditions, for our enemies were standing safely in front of our guns behind high walls, whereas their bullets smashed devastatingly into the ranks of our soldiers’.\footnote{Ibid.} However, although they were not victors, they were ‘also not defeated’, still hoping for volunteers from the rest of Germany and for a successful winter campaign.\footnote{\textit{Das Tagewerk eines Adjutanten im schleswig-holsteinschen Heere}, ibid., no. 3, 921.} Soldiers continued to fight for Schleswig-Holstein because it was a just cause, despite the threat of Denmark and the Bundestag that they would be treated as ‘traitors’.\footnote{\textit{Vom schleswig-holsteinschen Heere}, ibid., no. 4, 681.} “Their dogged resistance, in an army which had been hailed as ‘the best that Germany possesses’ as late as 1849, was chronicled by reporters, who continued to lurk around the military headquarters and encampments, as heroic acts of defiance.”\footnote{Ibid., 1850, vol. 9, no. 4, 683–4.} Accounts of combat, humorous interludes (for instance, the taunting of a pompous, shabby actor who arrived to volunteer as an officer, since ‘in the realm of my art I have often been more than a lieutenant’), and descriptions of the harshness of the landscape and daily life (‘exhausted, frozen and soaked through to the last layer of clothing’, buffeted by the ‘cold northwest wind’ typical of the region) were regular elements of journalists’ reports, yet they remained tied to the conventions of an adventure story.\footnote{\textit{Grenzboten}, 1849, vol. 8, no. 4, 455; ibid., 1850, vol. 9, no. 4, 685.} Those journalists who did describe killing and death, such as the \textit{Grenzboten} correspondent Julius von Wickede, stayed within the traditions of the picaresque.\footnote{Ibid., 681, 683–4.} A good example appeared in his collection of ‘pictures from a life of war’, published in 1853, which recounted the story of Liesch, a supplier of milk and other products to the army in Schleswig-Holstein, and Jochen, her fiancé and a
volunteer in the ‘well-known Bracklowsche Freikorps’. As soon as the just war of independence for Schleswig-Holstein from the Danish yoke broke out in March 1848, Jochen had gone to his master, the owner of a noble Gut in the territory, to ask for his permission to serve, which had been granted willingly, since ‘the whole nobility of Schleswig-Holstein were fully convinced of the justice of the struggle, to which [Jochen’s landlord] had devoted all his own sons’. A ‘quiet, sensible, morally virtuous man’, Jochen had soon become an outstanding soldier who was glad to leave behind life in the Freikorps with its ‘looser morals’ (in spite of ‘its very good elements’) for a regular corps of Jäger, with its ‘stricter discipline’ and ‘the care of the officers for their own’, which meant that Liesch was able to join him during the campaign. In this idyllic context, combat could seem like a game, with wayward Danish shots met with shouts of ‘missed’. As a bullet hit his cap, ‘Jochen made nothing of it’ and ‘showed the Danes, mockingly, that only his cap had been hit, not his head’; as the soldier next to him was shot dead, ‘our Jäger placed the “Käppis” of the hit man in such a way that the Danes eagerly shot at this deception’, filling him with ‘delight’. Although Jochen ‘hated the Danes’ and looked on ‘with great joy’ as ‘they were hit by his bullets’, he insisted on treating them honourably as prisoners, refusing to allow a young Danish dragoon, who refused to give himself up despite being surrounded, to be killed by German soldiers. Such cases, claimed Wickede, ‘occurred many times during the course of the war’. In 1850, Jochen was hit by a Danish bullet in the chest, wounding him ‘so seriously that he immediately sank to his knees’ but not prompting him to call for assistance, as he made his way to the rear. For her part, ‘Liesch did not dissolve into tears as she heard of the misfortune of her Jochen . . . but gave him immediate help’, forced to watch ‘the wounded man succumb, after terrible pains which he strove to confront as well as possible with manly fortitude’, becoming ‘a corpse after three weeks’. The pathos of the burial was that of a morality play, revealing the simple goodness and mixed fortunes of its German, peasant protagonists:

As the small group of pall-bearers, with the dully swirling tambourine at its head, carried the three corpses to the cemetery of Rendsburg, a pale girl followed behind them. She threw the first handful of earth on the coffin, then she sank in silent prayer to her knees and stayed in this posture until the last soldiers had left the cemetery.

Liesch did not go back to supplying the army and could be found in the crowd at Rendsburg, ‘a pale, stooped figure of a woman’ afflicted by illness, as imperial Austrian troops entered the town, playing a victory march. She died shortly afterwards and was buried ‘on the day that Rendsburg was given over fully to the Danes’. The melancholy of Schleswig-Holstein’s fate was embodied in the person of Liesch and Jochen, but their own wounding, illness, suffering, and death were barely examined.

166 J. v. Wickede, Bilder aus dem Kriegsleben (Stuttgart, 1853), 140–1.
167 Ibid., 140.
168 Ibid., 141.
169 Ibid., 143.
170 Ibid.
171 Ibid., 144.
172 Ibid.
173 Ibid., 149.
174 Ibid., 150.
175 Ibid.
176 Ibid., 151.
177 Ibid.
The depiction of the conditions of war in Schleswig-Holstein, which remained subordinated in all publications to reportage of the events of the revolution, did little to revise the heroic conceptualization of warfare which had occurred after 1815. In the opinion of most journalists in and after 1850, a national war over the duchies was worth fighting, not least to make good the failings of Frankfurt and to make amends for the duplicity of the Great Powers, which—in Arndt’s words—had proved to be the ‘devastators, the exploiters and the predators of Germany’. The abandoned troops of Schleswig-Holstein ‘stand, fight and bleed not for themselves alone, but for all Germans, for Germany as a whole,’ wrote the nationalist proselytizer in the *Könische Zeitung* in August 1850: ‘Foreigners have had the audacity to do what they liked with it [Germany] and its future, at the same time as anticipating decisions and sealing its fate once and for all’. The victim status of both Schleswig-Holstein and the German nation could only be altered by ‘actions’, agreed the *Allgemeine Zeitung*, despite its proximity to Vienna and the campaign for a greater Germany. ‘Where is Germany?’ asked the Catholic, ‘greater German’ *Deutsches Volksblatt* on 7 August: ‘Every shot which falls on Rendsburg’s walls brings this question, thunderously, to our ears.’ Whereas the Berlin-based, liberal *National-Zeitung* argued that Prussia should back the entire German nation as it joined the uprising of Schleswig-Holstein, the *Volksblatt* saw the same actions as ‘the first foundation stone’, in ‘the far North’, of ‘the great idea of a central European Reich’. Yet both publications backed the uprising as a worthy national cause, to be prosecuted by means of war. Conservative newspapers in Prussia were more reluctant to back the insurrection in Schleswig-Holstein, given that at least some of their leaders and journalists still denied the diplomatic significance of a German ‘nation’ and that most of them advocated a rapprochement with Austria—not war—at the time of the Hohenzollern and Habsburg monarchies’ stand-off at Olmütz, which was prompted by the question of intervention in Holstein and, especially, Hesse-Kassel in late November 1850. Nonetheless, even in conservative circles, there were those—like one correspondent in the *Evangelische Kirchenzeitung* in July 1850—who continued to see the conflict in the duchies as a legitimate ‘war of defence’ on the part of one *Volk* (the Schleswig-Holsteiners) against another (the Danes). Other conservatives, in Prussia and in Austria, opposed the conflict on political and national grounds, not on military ones. Few, if any, onlookers contended that the costs of the war in Schleswig-Holstein had outweighed the potential benefits, partly because combat had been portrayed in such romantic, heroic colours. One lithograph appearing in the *Gartenlaube* in 1863, which displayed a ‘picture of a camp in 1850’ in an...
obvious attempt to foster support for the contemporary conflict with Denmark, envisaged well-fed, convivial soldiers from Schleswig-Holstein in smart but casually unbuttoned uniforms enjoying a bounteous midday meal in the bucolic yard of a native farm (see Figure 5.2). This image of the war had been maintained by journalists, historians, and other writers throughout the 1850s and early 1860s.

Figure 5.2 ‘Schleswig–Holsteinsche Truppen beim Ausrathen des Mittagsfleisches’
Source: Gartenlaube. Deutsche Blätter, 1863, 789.

The romantic view of war disseminated by press coverage of the conflict in Schleswig-Holstein was reinforced by occasional reporting of wars overseas. Such a view, although qualified, predominated even during the Crimean War, which was

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treated as an adventure as well as a conflict between the European Great Powers, with the potential to extend from the periphery of the continent to its centre. ‘No place in the wide world catches public attention at this moment more than the Crimea’, claimed the *Grenzboten* early in 1854, in large part because it was the site of a war between the Great Powers, carrying the risk of escalation and bringing to an end the long period of ‘peace’ between the powers since 1815.187 The war was, in the words of the *Historisch-politische Blätter*, a ‘European-Oriental conflict’.188 Yet, despite contrary predictions in the German press, the fighting neither spread to Europe nor implicated the German states in military action.189 Throughout the course of the conflict, travel writing, which drew on a long-established tradition of Western Europeans’ voyages to the Balkans, the Ottoman Empire, and the ‘Orient’, was interspersed with descriptions of sieges and battles, to a greater extent than during Napoleon’s invasion of Russia in 1812, which initially had been treated by some correspondents and diarists as a foreign adventure but which ultimately had been subsumed within broader military reports of the Napoleonic Wars.190 One cartoon in the liberal satirical magazine *Kladderadatsch* entitled ‘The Newest Post and Travel Map of Europe, from the Kladderadatsch Geographical Institute’ (1854), envisaged a jumble of infantry columns, arms manufacturers, and stertotypical national characters moving in different directions in uncoordinated activity, as the Crimea—marked ‘Asia’—went up in smoke behind them.191 In this sense, the Crimean War was cast in the same light as colonial and other wars overseas in South America and China, which were presented to readers as distant, exotic, and exciting events.192

187 *Grenzboten*, 1854, vol. 13, no. 4, 361; also, ibid., no. 4, 58. Also, *Gartenlaube*, 1854, vol. 11, 126. *Die Presse* (Vienna), 26 Sept. 1854, commented on the ‘extraordinary interest which the expedition to the Crimea is currently enjoying’.


189 On the possibility of escalation into a European war, see the Allgemeine Zeitung, 12 Nov. 1853, 5099, which still doubted that the war would develop into a ‘general’ one; and ibid., 13 and 24 Oct. 1854, 4561–2, which talk of the war spreading to Germany and Europe. On the transition from the first position to the second, see ibid., 28 Mar. and 7 June 1854. Also, F. Engels, ‘The European War’, *New York Daily Tribune*, 2 Feb 1854, in K. Marx and F. Engels, *Gesamtausgabe* (Berlin, 1985), vol. 13, 3–7.


There was a more or less unquestioned acceptance, including amongst liberals like the economist Friedrich List (who wanted to maintain the existence of ‘barbarous nationalities’), that the ‘barbaric and half-civilized countries of Central and South America, Asia and Africa’ would be subjected to ‘pacification’ and ‘civilizing operations’ by European powers, especially Britain. The Oriental question’, as List labelled it in *Das nationale System der politischen Oekonomie* (1841), encompassed not only the Ottoman Empire and Near East (and, therefore, the Crimea), but also India, China, and the eastern territories of the Russian Empire. ‘Sooner or later, Europe will see itself placed before the necessity of taking the whole of Asia into its care and subjected to its discipline,’ the economist declared:

In this whole chaos of lands and peoples, there is no single nationality which would be worthy or capable of continuation or rebirth. The complete dissolution of Asiatic nationalities thus seems inevitable and a renaissance of Asia only seems possible through an injection of European energy, through the gradual introduction of the Christian religion and European morals and order, by means of European immigration and paternalistic European governance.

Consequently, wars overseas were usually believed to be legitimate and even natural or beneficial. As the *Allgemeine Zeitung*’s coverage—in the form of reprint reports from London newspapers—of Britain’s intervention in China in 1839–42 and 1856–60 demonstrates, little attempt was made to discover the causes of the conflicts—they were not labelled ‘opium wars’ at the time—or to get nearer to the fighting. The reporting of revolutions in Naples (1820–1) and Portugal (1820–6), mutiny in Spain (1820–3), and wars of independence in Greece (1821–9) and Belgium (1830–9) was more regular and sympathetic, with the lionization of foreign volunteers in Greece by philhellenic supporters, but it belonged to an era of restricted press activity, which was not comparable to that of the 1850s. Most articles on Greek independence in the 1820s were filed from Constantinople. Like ‘the war of Russia against the Porte in 1828 and 1829, the Polish uprising in 1830–31 and the Hungarian, Austrian–Sardinian and Danish–German wars’ of 1848–51, which had not seen ‘two of the principal powers fight with each other’ and which had not therefore constituted ‘genuine interruptions’ of the peace, these early nineteenth-century conflicts were represented as sets of events in the Austrian
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and German press which were secondary or subordinate to those of domestic politics, especially those of the revolution, and to those of diplomacy and foreign affairs more generally.198

In contrast to earlier foreign conflicts, the Crimean War was followed closely by German newspapers and periodicals, many of which had correspondents on the spot.199 Partly because of the emergence of mass-circulation illustrated magazines such as the Gartenlaube, which had 5,000 subscribers in its founding year of 1853 and 42,000 by 1856, and partly because it involved Britain, France, and Russia, with Austria also mobilizing troops and forcing a Russian evacuation of Moldavia and Wallachia, the war between Turkey and Russia was reported in a new fashion.200 For the first time since the Napoleonic campaigns, details of which continued to emerge after 1815, graphic depictions of the suffering and killing of war were disseminated to a wide readership.201 By early 1855, towards the end of the winter-long siege of Sevastopol by British and French forces, candid descriptions were given of what the Gartenlaube called ‘the horrible things which come to light in every war and, above all when battles turn into ghastly scenes on the battlefield, which can shake even the most hardened heart’.202 Although such scenes were counterbalanced by supposed improvements in sanitation and medical care, with the same article going on to describe the invention in the British army of a form of ambulance (a covered carriage carrying three lightly wounded men on a front pinion and two seriously wounded laid out inside), they were no less shocking, as one British-influenced report on the military hospital at Scutari on the Bosphorus, ‘350 miles away from the Crimea’, showed, alongside a ‘portrait of Miss Florence Nightingale’: ‘86 English women and girls’, mostly ‘from the educated classes and good, propertied families’, had volunteered to look after ‘4,200 mutilated soldiers’ with ‘hideous wounds’, which were the result of ‘the bloody scenes of horror of the war’.203

198 Grenzboten, 1855, vol. 13, no. 4, 58.
199 Part of the press’s concern centred on the possibility of the war extending to Germany; see, for example, ‘Die neueste deutsche Phase der orientalischen Frage’, Historisch-politische Blätter, 1854, vol. 34, no. 2, 140–63.
200 For the circulation of Gartenlaube, see K. Belgum, Popularizing the Nation, 200.
201 Memoirs of the Napoleonic Wars continued to appear and were juxtaposed with accounts of contemporary wars: see, for instance, ‘Erinnerungen aus dem Jahre 1806’, Gartenlaube, 1856, vols. 44 and 45, 597–9, 610–12. Nikolaus Buschmann, Einkreisung und Waffenbruderschaft, 57, points to an article by Julius von Wicke on Algeria (‘Kriegserleben in Algerien’, Gartenlaube, 1854, vol. 18) as evidence of the existence of ‘unleashed warfare’, but this was arguably more restricted in its descriptions and was published at the same time as accounts of the Crimean War (including those by Wicke himself).
203 ‘Hospital-Scenen vom Kriegsschauplatze. Mit Portrait der Miß Florence Nightingale’, ibid., 1855, vol. 6, 74. Grenzboten, 1854, vol. 13, no. 2, 297, also stressed the ‘humanity’ of at least some of the fighting. On British reporting of the war, which clearly influenced some of the German coverage (as in this case), see A. Lambert and S. Badsey (eds), The War Correspondents: The Crimean War (Strand, 1994); S. Markovits, The Crimean War in the British Imagination (Cambridge, 2009), 12–62. On France, see L. Case, French Opinion on War and Diplomacy during the Second Empire (Philadelphia, 1954).
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In ‘Pictures from the Current War’, ‘various eye-witnesses’ recounted for the Gartenlaube how, in May 1855, they had gone back to Inkerman, the site of one of the war’s largest battles on 25 October 1854, to find ‘long, dense tufts of grass, weighed down with blossom’ indicating—‘high above the natural greenery of the plain’—‘the mass graves, in which the shot and cut-down from 25 October rest in their hundreds, each in a dug-out hollow’:

The smell of corpses mixed with the herb-like aroma of spring made an indescribably shocking impression, most sensibly on the horses. They snorted and whinnied with their manes erect amongst the grass and flowers, not biting a single stalk, and they could only be guided through the area with the greatest violence.\(^{204}\)

The birds, too, were still. ‘Soon the monuments of that terrible, “glorious” October day piled up along our way,’ the same correspondent continued:

The skeleton of an English dragoon lay there between the stalks of grass, where he had fallen. Torn scraps of his red uniform played with gnawed-off bones. His buttons had all been cut off. He must have fallen right at the start of the battle, as the heavy cavalry came under the fire of Russian artillery close by ‘Canrobert’s hill’. Not far away lay, in friendship, a Russian skeleton, not completely without flesh. They could have got on together just as well in life, if the great stately wisdom of the creators and maintainers of the European balance of power had really settled on four points as men rather than on question marks as diplomats. The small round skull of the Russian had been picked bare and eviscerated by vultures, leaving only its red hair to flutter madly around his deep eye sockets.

Further on, another Russian skeleton seemed to have sprung to the heights out of its grave, between bullets and fragments of cartridges. Only its feet were covered. Its upper body loomed up and an arm was stuck in a position, as if threatening us. Now we had to force our horses with all our strength through labyrinths of half-decayed artillery and cavalry horses, beside and under which single, torn-off human limbs and bits of skull, bleached saddles, rusting bridles, buckles, scraps of clothes etc. were strewn. A terrible labyrinth of fights to the death now laid to rest in the contortions with which death had risen up in them in an act of deliverance. The rain had washed the top layers from countless graves so that the corpses stared upwards grimly and threateningly from the grass and flowers, as if to bring down the vengeance of heaven on their death, their burial and this conduct of the war.

Drums and whistles and our spurs drive us and our horses onwards in the full force of life through the opulence of death and the dawning spring, today still children of the latter, only perhaps to sink under its blooms tomorrow, dismembered and dead.\(^{205}\)

The representations of war which such eyewitnesses gave were intended, it appeared, both to fascinate and to shock. They were similar to those presented, usually in private correspondence, by combatants themselves.\(^{206}\)

The same article went on to give a minutely detailed, contemporaneous account of fighting at Mamelon, Taganrog, and Malakhov hill, outside Sevastopol. At the

\(^{204}\) ‘Bilder aus dem jetzigen Kriege’, Gartenlaube, 1855, vol. 27, 356.

\(^{205}\) Ibid., 356–7.

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first, on 22 and 23 May 1855, ‘about 5,000 French had blown up mines and taken trenches, with the loss of 1,700 men, and they had bayoneted hundreds upon hundreds in the pursuit of fleeing Russians, since no pardon was asked for or granted’.

After ‘this disgustingly expensive victory, for which General Pelissier was ready to sacrifice 10,000 men’, the soldiers prepared to mount an assault on the ‘irregular, stony hill of the Mamelon’, from which ‘heavy cannon and thousands of smaller, gullets of fire, spat out death’ to threaten the Allies’ positions.

The attack would be ‘one of the most audacious, bloody acts of war’ ever undertaken, the Gartenlaube asserted. ‘If you think of 12,000 men of the most varied units of the army in a wide, desolate, sullen ravine, menaced from the vantage point of the fearsome Mamelon’, which was surrounded by ‘desolate hills’ stretching away from it and by ‘red-coated English, flashing officers, . . . shouts of triumph from all corners and distances, stormily returned in every accent by the incalculable, dense, closed ranks of the French’, ‘then you’ll be able to paint a pale picture of the scene for yourself’, one of the eyewitnesses continued.

Once ‘15,000 yellow Turks and brown Egyptians’ under Omar Pasha, the French and British general staffs, and ‘a couple of thousand of English below’ were added, one would have assembled ‘the main motifs of this attack’. When the actual—not the imagined—attack on the Mamelon took place in June 1855, the Russians were taken by surprise and unexpectedly fled, encouraging the French troops, ‘without any command’, to pursue them and leaving them without cover, exposed to Russian flanking fire, so that ‘the greater part of these most daring ones fell during the retreat’.

Five to six hundred of every thousand British soldiers, foolishly forced to retreat by their commander Lord Raglan, were also ‘mowed down’ by the Russians, who had been allowed ‘to recover their strength’. ‘The fighting which now took place on and around the Mamelon was slaughter of the usual kind, which always occurs in war,’ the correspondent contended, ignoring the fact that descriptions of such slaughter were not at all commonplace.

The sun came up the next morning on ‘many thousands of distorted, rigid faces of corpses’, with eighty to ninety having ‘fallen as victims of the modesty of their commanders’.

The assault on Malakhov hill ten days later, on 18 June, was similarly written in ‘blood red’ ink in ‘this shuddering history of war’, a ‘terrible counterpoint’ to the battle of Waterloo exactly forty years earlier.

Like the bombardment of Taganrog on the Sea of Azov shortly afterwards, which turned a bustling town of 22,000 ‘Russians, Tartars, Armenians, Cossacks, Germans and some French’ into ‘piles of ash’, the actions caused the author to doubt the purposes of and consequences wrought by ‘the western bearers of civilization’.

207 Gartenlaube, 1855, vol. 27, 356, 357.
208 Ibid.
209 Ibid.
210 Ibid.
211 Ibid., vol. 27, 358.
212 Ibid., 358.
213 Ibid.
214 Ibid. Another similar account can be found in ‘Nach der Schlacht an der Traktirbrücke’, ibid., vol. 36, 462: ‘Near the bridge of Traktir, not far from Sevastopol, another battle was fought and insatiable earth again drank rivers of blood.’
215 Ibid., vol. 27, 358.
216 Ibid.
217 Ibid.
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Military technology—one of the products of ‘civilization’—also appeared, on some readings, to be one of the principal menaces facing civilized societies.\(^{218}\) Although such technology encompassed steamships and railways (with the construction of a 7-mile-long stretch from Balaklava to Sevastopol in February–March 1855), it rested above all on what an article in the *Gartenlaube* described as ‘the massive use of the gun principle’.\(^{219}\) Contrary to commonly held expectations, wrote one expert in the *Grenzboten*, the transformation of strategic principles and military technologies had occurred after 1815 during peacetime. ‘It may appear surprising but it is nonetheless a fact that wars themselves are not always the periods in which the system of war has made the greatest advances,’ he noted in 1855: ‘More happened in many periods of peace than in the preceding period of fighting, largely because the experiences gained in the latter could only be made useful during the succeeding era of calm.’\(^{220}\) Those epochs ‘dominated by a great reforming spirit’ like ‘the twenty-three war years that began with the toppling of the French monarchy’ were not exempt from the rule, with ‘far less’ happening ‘for the progress of the three branches of the military than during the later period of peace’, notwithstanding the prominence of the war-time leadership of the ‘military heroes of our century’.\(^{221}\) The innovations which marked the post-Napoleonic peace were ‘the renewal of artillery’ in the 1820s and 1830s and the ‘improved arms and manner of fighting of the infantry’ in the 1830s and 1840s.\(^{222}\) Both involved the changed shape and material of projectiles—bullets and shells—and the different means of firing them, which meant that they could be projected further and with more devastating effect.\(^{223}\)

The latter innovation concerned the invention of the so-called ‘Minié ball’ (more accurately labelled a ‘Miniékugel’ or ‘bullet’ in German), which was a conical, soft-lead bullet with grooves and a hollow base designed to spin the projectile and to provide a better seal for the expanding gas from the propulsive explosion, giving it an accurate range of 600 yards or more. The bullet also cleaned the barrel of the gun as it was fired, overcoming the difficulties of jamming and misfiring weapons, which had dogged infantrymen since the early modern period. ‘The main point of the Minié casing is obviously its great range’ and also ‘the safety of the shot’, which propelled the bullet at a speed of 2,000 yards per second, the *Gartenlaube* informed its readers amidst a flurry of technical details.\(^{224}\) The bullets could be pressed—rather than poured in a molten state—by a machine, which ‘now works day and night and can, in a short space of time, deliver a huge pile of such bullets’.\(^{225}\) The efficacy and ease of use of the rifle ensured that it came to dominate infantry tactics, making sniping, skirmishing, entrenchments, and other forms of protection central parts of warfare, at the expense of cavalry charges and

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\(^{218}\) William McNeill, *The Pursuit of Power: Technology, Armed Force and Society since A.D. 1000* (Chicago, 1982), 224–41, 256–61, contends that trench warfare was developed in Crimea alongside the use of new kinds of artillery, which themselves were the product of industrialization.


\(^{221}\) Ibid.\(^{222}\) Ibid., 58–9.

\(^{222}\) See the image of ‘Die Lancaster-Kanone’, *Gartenlaube*, 1855, vol. 49, 602.


\(^{225}\) Ibid.
hand-to-hand combat. Because they were manufactured from soft lead and penetrated bodies with great force, Minié bullets left terrible, often deadly wounds, far worse than traditional types of shot.

The same was true of the former set of technological innovations, which concerned the introduction of lighter field artillery, high-calibre ‘bomb cannons’, and shrapnel shells. As a result of these changes, some commentators had claimed, from the mid-1830s onwards, that artillery had ‘increased its tactical decisiveness to such an extent that the other divisions of the army would no longer be able to counter it in closed formations’. Although such claims were exaggerated, continued the Grenzboten’s correspondent, they indicated the centrality of guns and shells as definitive ‘fire-arms of modernity’, with the capacity to maim, kill, and destroy in a new way. Towards the end of the siege of Sevastopol in the summer of 1855, the Allies fired a daily 75,000 rounds at the small, fortified town, reducing it to rubble and causing 800 Russian casualties per day. Heavy artillery such as the Lancaster cannon, of which drawings were provided in the Gartenlaube, could fire conical, 25-pound missiles over 10,000 feet and create breaches in walls at a distance of 7,500 feet. It seemed to have the potential to alter the nature—and combatants’ experiences—of modern warfare.

The manner in which such warfare was comprehended in the German lands during the 1850s and the ways in which German contemporaries believed it would be experienced in future depended on the press. Candid literary descriptions, as has been seen, could convey the shock of combatants’ and witnesses’ sensations and reactions with great immediacy. In illustrated magazines, paintings, and photographs, which—through the sanitized but harsh-toned images of Roger Fenton—became known to at least some members of the public in Britain and elsewhere, the conditions of combat and camp life appeared to become real for the first time. German illustrators and journalists were aware of such photographs, bringing them to the attention of readers. The stark contrasts of their engravings in periodicals, though softer than those of photographs, seemed to coincide with the harshness of the Crimean landscape, which consisted of treeless karst or primeval mud. ‘The current site of war between Inkerman, Balaklava and Chersones...

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227 ‘Die Feuerwaffen der Neuzeit’, Gartenlaube, 1855, vol. 49, 599. These innovations forced the Grenzboten’s correspondent to revise his earlier evaluation of ‘Die vier Armeen in der Krim’, Grenzboten, 1854, vol. 13, no. 4, 361–70, in which he had treated artillery as if it were no more important than the infantry or cavalry.
228 O. Figes, Crimea, 377.
229 Gartenlaube, 1855, vol. 49, 602.
231 For example, ‘Der Weg zwischen Balaklava und dem englischen Lager’, Gartenlaube, 1855, vol. 10, 137.
[a classical ruin] constitutes on its geological surface a terrible, fitting basis for the winter war and camp scenes', recorded the Gartenlaube.

The earth here really looks like that imagined by geologists long before the first people, as a playground for amphibious enormities and mud monstrosities, ichthyosaurs, pleiosaurus and sundry other ancestors of crocodiles and alligators. An unremitting, tough mud, without trees or vegetation but with channels and puddles, from which desolate rocks and hills protrude in slovenly disorder. For an eye used to the signs of civilization—paths, fields, welcoming villages and towns, trees and pictures of vegetation of other kinds—there is nothing to behold. The wilderness, as it ruled on earth millennia before the first book of Moses, has returned, and the war between western civilization and eastern barbarism, dirty and ragged, hungry and dismembered, unwashed and unshaved, wades through this wilderness. Yet it doesn't only wade through the mere ‘primeval soup’ from which the current geological crust of the earth is formed, the soup is richly sown with torn-off limbs of horses and people, half decayed and half dead fallen ones, wheels, bullets, . . . , straw, scraps of clothes, blood, bits of weapons, . . . , thousands of tiny puddles created by the hooves of horses, whose imprints remain set in the glutinous brew and were filled with water, blood and snow. . . . The sky stretches comfortlessly over the corpse-seeking carrion birds and rains, snows and bears down stormily on the dead, the dying, the ailing and the healthy. Here and there, weapons glint, cannons flash and bursts of fire natter, sometimes here, sometimes close by, sometimes further away. . . . Here, there is a cadaver-coloured, tattered, wild-bearded fighter who is collapsing, dragging himself with difficulty to a rock in order to rest his head, at least, against something and to die. Other soldiers wind their way past him, throw him a pitying glance and let him lie there, since they can barely drag themselves along.233

In such descriptions, there are both literary references—to Moses' flight, to the return from Moscow in 1812, and perhaps to gothic novels—and visual ones, imagining 'scenes' and 'pictures', recalling images of dinosaurs in encyclopaedias and recreating the framing, spaces, and light effects of engravings and photographs ('here', 'there', 'the sky stretches', 'weapons glint').

Literature had been laid bare by photography and art, according to another correspondent of the Gartenlaube in a combined article and print representing ‘The Road between Balaklava and the English Camp’.234 Contemporaries owed the fact of their 'nakedness' to 'a welter of pictures, which are true to nature and to the situation, of the great tragedy in the Crimea, old Tauris, which does not look as gentle as the classical “Iphigenia in Tauris” of Goethe'.235 The depiction of the new road through Tauris showed ‘the bogs, valleys and hills, snow and rain, thousands of fallen horses, overturned wagons, buried supplies, frozen soldiers etc.’, with figures toiling along a path to nowhere, reminiscent of the hopeless itinerary of returning French and German soldiers in 1812.236 In one article, the reported eyewitness is a British painter, with readers given a

234 ‘Der Weg zwischen Balaklava und dem englischen Lager’, ibid., vol. 10, 137.
235 Ibid.
236 Ibid.
‘depiction’ (Schilderung) of the battle of Chernaia (16 August 1855), as if via the medium of the artist’s gaze:

Dying and dead lay around in all directions and at all angles. Some died with their faces outwards, their hands grasping the air and thus reaching out until they fell flat. Others were dead and stiff with straight uplifted arms, as if they had been turned all of a sudden into stone in the middle of a struggle to the death. Many had in any case immediately fallen and lay with their faces flat on the earth. The wounds and dismemberment of others looked horrible. Two Frenchmen lay close to one another. Each robbed of an arm and shoulder blade by the same shot of a cannon. Elsewhere lay three Russians one behind the other, the first wholly without the front of his head, without a face, the second with a chest with a hole through it, and the third with its torso torn open: the result of a single shot.

Still, the dead were not by far the most horrible thing! No, the dead lay still, even if in the most unnatural positions. But the dying, the dying! That rasping last call for water in a completely incomprehensible language, but made clear enough by some via gesticulations, sticking their tongue out and pointing, and even trying to go through the operation of drinking symbolically during their last breath!237

The Gartenlaube deliberately gave its readers different views of battle. ‘The drama of the peninsula [Crimea] continuously calls forth, in bloody flux, new depictions of scenes and situations, which are designed to give us the clearest possible picture of events there,’ remarked one journalist.238 Sometimes this striving to find a novel perspective of the action necessitated a bird’s-eye view, looking down on the fighting or bombardment below, but often it meant the relaying of sights seen by soldiers themselves amidst fighting or carnage. In the most extreme cases, words were favoured because there were fewer constraints placed on written accounts than on graphic representations of contemporary events, yet they were used increasingly to recreate a shocking visual spectacle.

Such reconstructed spectacles and descriptions were rare and had a limited effect. They do not appear to have prevented most observers from calling for or countenancing war. The majority of newspapers supported the Habsburg monarchy as it moved from the mobilization of a 130,000-strong army of observation in the border areas of Wallachia and Moldavia in the autumn of 1853 via the occupation of the principalities after Russia’s withdrawal in August 1854 to more open threats of war.239 Of the thirty-two German newspapers surveyed by the Austrian Presseleitungskomitee in 1855, fourteen supported Vienna’s stance in the Crimean War, as it faced the possibility of military hostilities, and ten opposed it.240

239 G. E. Rothenberg, The Army of Francis Joseph, 50–1. Such stances were aided by the positive reporting of the Austrian occupation, even by Vienna’s liberal press: see Die Presse, 26 Sept. 1854, whose correspondent in Jassy in Moldavia talked of ‘the sympathies which the Austrian troops meet with here’, with the inhabitants of the city resolving to erect triumphal gate for ‘the glorification of the entry of the Austrian troops’.
Most conservative publications, influenced by states which feared being drawn into war, were opposed to Austria's stance, which had been made worse from ministers' points of view by its rapprochement with the western powers. In Saxony, for instance, the Dresdner Journal was said to publish 'articles...influenced by the royal Saxon minister Freiherr v. Beust himself', helping to ensure that it was 'decidedly friendly towards Russia', 'hateful towards the western powers', and 'mis-trustful of Austria', according to the committee. The official Leipziger Zeitung was held, 'in the oriental question', to be 'fully in the direction of the Kreuzzeitung, i.e. Russian, and, where this does not seem permissible, collecting everything which speaks against the western powers, with suspicions cast against the k. k. government'. It was joined by the Freimüthige Sachsenzeitung, which carried articles originating in Beust's cabinet but which also rested on the 'voluntary contributors in the Saxon noble party' (in effect, 'the Saxon Kreuzzeitungspartei'), 'enthusiastic for Russia' and 'constantly warning, and even threatening, Austria'.

For its part, the 'Neue Preussische (Kreuz)Zeitung', whose 'great advantage vis-à-vis all other German papers' was that its 'entire content' was 'permeated by a single tendency', remained at once 'ultra-Prussian up to the point of visible narrow-mindedness' and 'decisively inimical to Austria', piling up 'for this purpose all hateful memories of stock Prussians against Austria' and 'reminiscences of 1813 against France' in order to underline its 'ultra-Russian credentials', in the words of the Austrian press committee report. The conservative mouthpiece 'maintains links for its own ends extending into the king's cabinet (secret counsellor Illaire, Niebuhr, General Gerlach), to the higher circles of the military (Field Marshal Graf Dohna, General v. d. Gröben, amongst others), with individual ministers (v. Westphal, Manteuffel II, brother of the Minister-President and an Under-Secretary of State), and finally with the envoys of foreign states, e.g. Baron Budberg': 'From Frankfurt, Herr v. Bismarck-Schönhausen furnishes it extra-legally with malicious rumours against Austria'. Although it had earlier published 'vituperative anti-government articles, including those from smaller states', it had now stopped opposing Berlin because its position on the Crimean War coincided with that of the Prussian state.

Momentarily, the position of the reactionary camarilla tied to the Kreuzzeitung and that of the Prussian government and most of the states of the third Germany had converged. In the opinion of the Prussian-born Bavarian ministerial counsellor Wilhelm von Dönniges, expressed in a letter to King Max II on 8 May 1854, 'Prussia can count on having all the main states of the rest of Germany on its side, if it decides to represent German interests through its own mediation with Russia, above all.' This unity soon disappeared, however, with Prussia adopting a policy of armed neutrality, to the annoyance of St Petersburg, with the
Mittelstaaten avoiding committing themselves to either Russia or Austria and with
the camarilla—or ‘Kreuzzeitung’ party’—advocating a ‘struggle of the Germans’
against ‘the Slav-Greek-and-Turkish’, which Austria was too ‘negative’ and lacked
the courage to do.249

Much of the rest of the press in the German lands was critical of the pro-Russian
posturing of the Kreuzzeitung and of the pusillanimity of Prussia and the other
German states.250 To Varnhagen von Ense, who was closely connected to Berlin
society, it was likely that ‘the Russian government is giving huge sums of money
to the Kreuzzeitung people so that their scandal sheet eagerly takes Russia’s side’:
‘Of this money, Wägener, Goedsche, Stahl and Gerlach received the greater
part.’251 Like Prussian conservatives clustered around the Preußisches Wochenblatt,
edited by the Frankfurt academic Moritz August von Bethmann-Hollweg,
Varnhagen wanted Prussia to support Britain and France—‘my sympathies are nat-
urally with the western powers in the current conflicts’—and, as it gravitated
towards the ‘West’, Austria. Although he did not favour war, stating that ‘it is not
my thing which is being fought for here’, he struggled not to ‘lose [this] from view
in the tumult of daily opinion’, which generally pushed governments towards a
conflict.252 In this context, the king himself, who ‘reads nothing but the
Kreuzzeitung’, was ‘very agitated at the proclivity of public opinion, which doesn’t
blindly trust in his policy but wants to become independent’: ‘The entire popula-
tion of Berlin is inflamed and full of indignation over the impudent tirades of
Ludwig von Gerlach; everyone repeats the words of Vincke and Bethmann-
Hollweg—even in the lowest classes these are known and approved of.’253 The
principal ‘western’ group of the ’Wochenblatt’ party’, including the editor Julius von
Jasmund and the diplomats Guido von U sedom and Albert von Pourtales, came to
back the Habsburg monarchy’s mobilization of troops and threats of military

250 See, for instance, the Kölnische Zeitung in June 1854, which criticized the states of the
Confederation for belonging to ‘Russia’s German Bund’; K. Buchheim, Die Geschichte der Kölnischen
Zeitung (Cologne, 1976), vol. 3, 192. Kladderadatsch, 1854, vol. 7, 168, showed a young Prussian
‘lad’ (Knabe) in military uniform being terrified and bullied by a giant Russian ghost; another article
from 15 Oct. 1854, carrying the ironic title of ‘Good News’, Kladderadatsch, 189, commented that
‘the people of Germany’ were ‘united’, represented at effectively at Frankfurt, and that ‘peace’ was
imminent according to ‘a completely trustworthy Tartar’. Some publications such as the Historisch-
politische Blätter, 1854, vol. 33, no. 1, 607–31, examined the differences between ‘old’ and ‘young
Russia’ and between ‘western civilization and a Russian Volkscharakter’ in a relatively nuanced way;
also ‘Altrußland und die “heilige Allianz”’, Historisch-politische Blätter, 711–15. Jürgen Froehlich,
‘Repression und Lenkung versus Pressefreiheit und meinungsmarkt. Zur preussischen
Pressegeschichte in der Reichsbruedungszzeit 1848–71’, in B. Sösemann (ed.), Kommunikation
und Medien in Preussen vom 16 bis zum 19 Jahrhundert (Stuttgart, 2002), 375, points out that most
liberal publications in the German lands were happy to use Britain’s entry into the conflict as an
opportunity to pit liberalism against reaction.

Russen nach Constantinopol, which had argued that the tsarist regime was warring against ‘communist
revolutions’, was especially targeted: H.-C. Kraus, ‘Wahrnehmung und Deutung des Krimkrieges
in Preußen. Zur innenpolitischen Rückwirkung eines internationalen Großkonflikts’, in G. Maag,
W. Pyta, and M. Windisch (eds), Der Krimkrieg als erster europäischer Medienkrieg, 242.
253 Respectively, diary entries on 24 and 21 Mar. 1854 and 10 Apr. 1854, ibid., 8, 1, 57.
intervention, having initially argued—before Vienna had approached Paris and London—that, ‘if we must go to war, it would be more advantageous for us to have Austria as an enemy rather than as a friend’. 254 Christian Carl Josias von Bunsen, Prussia’s ambassador in London and a close associate of the king’s brother and heir Prince Wilhelm, went so far as to advise Friedrich Wilhelm IV in a memorandum of 1854 to back the maritime powers and expand Prussia at Austria’s expense. 255 The monarch agreed to his dismissal, believing—or professing to believe—that Bunsen had had a nervous breakdown, yet the diplomat’s stand revealed the extent to which the case for the war of the western powers was being made in Prussia and elsewhere. 256 Although discounted in his memoirs by Bismarck as ‘childish utopias’, such agitation involved figures as orthodox as Albrecht von Roon, the later War Minister under Bismarck, who was stationed at Cologne in the mid-1850s, and who was one of the military correspondents of the Wochenblatt’s publisher Friedrich Perthes. 257

The majority of newspapers and periodicals in the Hohenzollern monarchy and other German lands supported the war, pushing their governments to join Austria and the western powers. To Otto Elben, the editor and owner of the Schwäbischer Merkur, it was ‘almost self-evident’ that most of the press was against Russia, given the part that it had played in propping up the Holy Alliance and Metternich’s order within the German Confederation. 258 Despite the continuing anti-Habsburg leanings of ‘democratic’ publications like the Beobachter (Stuttgart), Westfälische Zeitung (Paderborn), and National-Zeitung (Berlin), which nonetheless had been said, ‘from various sides’, to look on ‘Austria with a certain trust or even with secret hopes’ as a result of ‘the policy followed by the k. k. cabinet in the oriental affair’, as the Presseleitungskomitee in Vienna put it, many ‘liberal’ papers of Germany—amongst which were the most significant and the most widely spread ones such as the Kölnische Zeitung, Bremen’s Weser-Zeitung, the Hau den-und Speersche Zeitung of Berlin etc.—have changed their tone, as a consequence of the decisive policy of the k. k. cabinet in the oriental conflict, or they express their inclination towards, or at least their applause for, Austria more or less openly. 259

To Kladderadatsch, which recalled the words of Schiller’s Wallenstein, Austria ‘came late, but still [it] came’. 260 Of the largest publications in northern and central Germany, copies of which radiated out into their regional hinterlands, the Kölnische

255 Ibid., 55–6.
256 Hans-Christof Kraus, ‘Wahrnehmung und Deutung des Krimkrieges in Preußen’, in G. Maag, W. Pyta, and M. Windisch (eds), Der Krimkrieg als erster europäischer Medienkrieg, 238–9, suggests that the Wochenblatt party’s hold over the monarch was broken by March 1854. Because of the sympathy of the king’s brother and successor, this turn of events was not seen to be irreversible at the time.
258 O. Elben, Geschichte des Schwäbischen Merkurs 1785–1885 (Stuttgart, 1885).
Zeitung (whose circulation in 1855 was 12,000–15,000) was said regularly to take ‘Austria’s side in the oriental question, especially against the Russian party in Prussia’; the Hamburger Nachrichten (11,000–12,000) was believed to follow ‘public opinion in the oriental business’, backing the war of the western states, ‘though always with…reservations’; and the Frankfurter Journal (10,000), which was subject to ‘Prussian influence’, worked ‘against the Bund and Austria sticking together’.261

In southern Germany, the ‘Catholic press’ had taken up ‘such an imposing and patriotic position in the oriental question that the consciousness of a generally affected occidental culture (abendländische Cultur), which had earlier been oscillating and unclear, had risen up and been clarified’.262 Although the states of the third Germany, meeting in the Bavarian town of Bamberg, had been ‘terrible’ in Varnhagen’s opinion, shying away from war (according to the report of the Bavarian Foreign Minister and President of the Ministerrat Ludwig von der Pfördten on 26 May 1854), newspapers such as the Augsburger Postzeitung, Mainzer Journal, Frankfurter Postzeitung, Casseler Zeitung, Hannoversche Zeitung, Leipziger Illustrirte Zeitung, Hamburger Correspondent, and Deutsches Volksblatt, which was published in Stuttgart, all backed Austria’s preparations for a military intervention.263 The Allgemeine Zeitung, the second largest southern German publication (after the Münchner Neueste Nachrichten, with its 15,000 subscribers), had proved so supportive of the Habsburg monarchy that its publisher Georg von Cotta received a letter of gratitude from the Austrian government, expressing ‘the full acknowledgement of the k. k. government for the patriotic and circumspect conduct of this important newspaper in its discussion of the position of Austria and Germany in respect of the oriental question’.264 The newspaper’s position, in its owner’s view in October 1854, merely mirrored that of ‘the public opinion of the nation’, which was ‘so little confused, so clearly energetic, that anyone who does not hold to the policy of Austria is depicted as being bribed by Russia’.265 The public’s appetite for war, it seemed to many observers in 1853–6, was undiminished, with many journalists urging the German states to enter the conflict.

Arguably, the presence of a powerful and demonized enemy in the Crimean War, akin to the role played by Napoleonic France in 1813–15 or 1870, might have reinforced German observers’ anxieties about the changing nature of warfare by the 1850s. The shifting allegiances of governments and the press, however, militated against such demonization.266 For the Allgemeine Zeitung as for many other German newspapers, the war between Russia and Turkey, which broke out in 1853, had appeared mainly to be about the defence of the rights of Christians in

the Ottoman Empire, recalling—as the Grenzboten pointed out in an explicit comparison in 1853—the earlier conflict between the two powers in 1828–9, in which St Petersburg had enjoyed broad support. After Russian troops had occupied Moldavia and Wallachia in July 1853, the Allgemeine Zeitung had openly doubted the reassurances of the Journal de Constantinople that ‘the barbaric times of the old Turks are now over’, rendering anachronistic the treaties which continued to grant judicial competencies ‘over their subjects to the representatives of the foreign powers’. The maintenance of such competencies was ‘a matter for which all Christian Great Powers have to have a concern’, the article went on, in part to prevent Russia from ‘exploiting’ it ‘for other reasons’ and in part to avert Turkish injustices and atrocities: ‘the introduction of laws and courts which treat all Turkish citizens equally impartially, whether believers or unbelievers, does not even appear to be in the realms of possibility as long as Islam is and remains the basis of the state’. Despite the objections and reproaches which were directed at the Allg. Ztg. because of the reception of our reports about the internal conditions of Turkey and ‘which gradually became weaker and finally quite silent’, noted the newspaper on 16 October 1853, it would continue to bring news of ‘abominations’ like the boiling and roasting of monks by ‘Turkish fanaticism’ and the cutting down of notables in ‘an open market’ by ‘armed hordes’. The correspondent declared:

Our aim in the publication of these facts—which, as long as the Allg. Ztg. is available to you, we shall carry on striving towards in order to clarify European opinion—is and will remain the same, even now that the Turkish question has gone from a state of peace, which was not a true peace, over to a state of war, which is allegedly not yet a war but which must soon become one… One should not forget, in all the political, financial and industrial considerations and calculations in whose bottomless depths this question is swirling around (to the shame of Europe), that the need of assistance of a defenceless Christianity in Turkey lies at the bottom of it, which will soon lead to horrors like those immeasurable outrages committed during the Greek uprising.

Since ‘the Russian intention of protecting Christianity’ had widely been suspected as a ruse to conceal the ‘expansion of the tsars’, it had been tempting to shut ‘ones eyes and ears to the real fount of the actual evil and the source of all the difficulties and dangers of the situation’, viewing ‘the independence, greatness and

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267 See the Allgemeine Zeitung’s reports in support of Russia, dated 18 Oct. 1828 (from the Moldavian town of Jassy), 24 Oct. 1828 (in its Beilage, no. 303), 6 June 1829 (citing the Journal d’Odesa), and 16 June 1829 (from Jassy). The Grenzboten, 1853, vol. 13, no. 4, 241–50, 330–7, printed an extensive report on the earlier campaigns before concluding that Turkey was in a stronger position in 1853 than it had been in 1828–9. For another comparison, see the Allgemeine Zeitung, 8 July 1853. The camarilla, in particular, stressed the Christian aspect of the campaign: H.-C. Kraus, ‘Wahrnehmung und Deutung des Krimkrieges in Preußen’, in G. Maag, W. Pyta, and M. Windisch (eds), Der Krimkrieg als erster europäischer Medienkrieg, 241.

268 The Grenzboten, 6 July 1853.

269 Ibid. The article mentions the cutting off of Greeks’ ears and noses, as they were ‘mishandled and dismembered in a barbaric fashion, by Turks during instances of “disorder”, as the Journal de Constantinople had put it.

worth of the Ottoman protégé as a European requirement’. For the Allgemeine Zeitung in October 1853, it was time for the German states and the European Great Powers ‘to join with Russia or take over from Russia’ the task of defending ‘Christianity in Turkey against the fanaticism of the Muslims’. As Britain and France prepared to declare war on Russia, which they eventually did on 28 March 1854, the Augsburg newspaper’s correspondent refused to ‘believe that an Anglo-French army will fight for the Turks’, not least because ‘Russia’s victory, supported by the Hellenes, Serbs, Bosnians and Bulgarians, who are mostly Greek Christians and deadly enemies of the Ottomans, is almost absolutely certain, if it pursues no other aim than the freeing of the Christians from the yoke of the [Turkish] crescent’. Even if France and Britain did intervene, they would arrive too late and be overpowered by Russia on the ground. Yet as the Austrian government, too, began to alter its stance, with ‘the mood here in the city [of Vienna] for Turkey and against Russia, in accordance with the opinion of the [Viennese] Lloyd and most Austrian papers’, the Allgemeine Zeitung started to qualify its criticism of the Ottoman Empire and Islam, merely stating at the end of March that ‘one cannot exactly say that they [the Austrians] are mad about the Turks’. Although traces of the publication’s earlier position—with references to ‘fanaticism in Constantinople’—could be found later in 1854, its positive coverage of the Habsburg monarchy’s defence of Turkey, ‘against the greatest danger which menaced [it] from the Russian side on the land bridge in Europe’, had come to overshadow its earlier doubts by October. Vienna’s actions against Russia and its ‘independent position vis-à-vis the entanglements of the Orient’ demonstrated that ‘Austria feels a rejuvenating force in its limbs’, which was worthy of Germany’s support and cooperation, even if it entailed war.

North German newspapers were less prone to the demonization of ‘Turks’ and ‘Muslims’ than Austrian, Catholic, and other southern German publications—looking back on a long history of conflict in the Balkans and Near East—and they were less likely to be swayed by Vienna’s rapprochement with the western powers, with ‘well-meaning Christian-Germanic souls in the North’ viewing ‘Austria as a European China’ (in the words of the Allgemeine Zeitung in March 1854), but they

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272 Ibid. For more on the Turkish war effort, see C. Badem, The Ottoman Crimean War, 1853–1856 (Leiden, 2010). For the Historisch-politische Blätter, 1854, vol. 33, no. 1, 530, the question hinged on ‘the extent to which Russia will be allowed to make use of the Porte’s visible decay’. On the speciousness of the Russian claim to protect Christians, see Catholic and conservative commentators like Johann Wilhelm Braun in his Berliner Briefe über die Orientalische Frage (Bonn, 1854), for instance.


275 Ibid. The same publication declared that Turkey was the ‘hereditary and imperial enemy’ of the ‘West’, ibid., 16 Apr. 1854. Other southern German, Catholic publications such as the Historisch-politische Blätter, 1854, vol. 33, no. 1, 527, assumed ‘that Russia would be forced by victories to wrest the dying Turkish empire from the western powers’, with ‘incalculable complications’ for the constellations of the states’ system.

276 Allgemeine Zeitung, 28 Mar. 1854.

277 For instance, ‘Zur historischen Aufhellung der diplomatischen Schachzüge in der orientalischen Frage’, ibid., 29 Apr., 7 June 1854. On the newspaper’s shift of position by October, see ibid., 24 Oct. 1854.

278 Ibid., 28 Mar. 1854.
remained similarly undecided about the identity and nature of potential enemies in the Crimean War. The Ottoman Empire was widely regarded at first as a threat to Christians and then, after the western states’ declaration of war and the Habsburg monarchy’s change of diplomatic course, as a foreign ally and a significant military power. This impression was reinforced by the common practice—especially during the ‘reaction’, when commentary on domestic politics was riskier—of reprinting articles in German publications from Austria, France, and Britain, where Turkey was treated favourably. As was the case in the Allgemeine Zeitung, the Ottoman Empire was still associated with ‘Asia’ or the ‘East’ and was subordinated to the machinations and shifting fortunes of European politics. Thus, for Heinrich Kruse, editor-in-chief of the Kölnische Zeitung from 1855 to 1872, it was necessary for the rest of Germany to follow the example of Austria—to which his predecessor Karl Heinrich Brüggemann had given ‘thundering congratulations’ in December 1854—in support of the English and the French in a war to protect ‘this communal culture (Bildung) of Europe against the push from Asia’. Given the alignment of powers, Turkey was no longer—by 1854—an eastern menace. Rather, it was treated in the same way as the other parties to the conflict or it was made an object of pity.

Like many correspondents, Marx and Engels oscillated between the two modes of representation. ‘Amidst all this confusion and uncertainty, one thing alone seems clear, and that is the extinction of the Moslem power as a distinct polity in Europe,’ they concluded in an article on the ‘European War’ in the New York Daily Tribune on 17 April 1854: ‘the emancipation of the Christians of Turkey, whether effected by peaceful concession or by violence, degrades Islamism from a political authority to a religious sect, and utterly uproots the old foundations of the Ottoman Empire.’ A few months later, it seemed as though Turkey’s army was the principal force, despite being ‘very badly cared for’ and unable ‘to execute rapid movements which would remove it to a distance from its base’, with ‘nearly a hundred thousand English and French soldiers’ merely ‘there to assist the Turks or make diversions in their favour’. Notwithstanding its mocking rather than revering tone, the content of the two exiled communists’ reportage was similar to

279 Ibid.
283 Marx and Engels, ‘That Bore of a War’, New York Daily Tribune, 17 Aug. 1854, ibid., 370. Marx made a similar point in ‘The War in the East’, The Zuid African (Cape Town), 6 Mar. 1854, ibid., 21–2, written in London on 4 Jan. 1854, referring to the split nature of the Turkish army: ‘We know besides that the Turkish army of Anatolia, recruited as it is from the Asiatic provinces, the seat of old Moslem barbarism, and counting in its ranks a great number of irregulars, unreliable though generally brave soldiers of adventure, fancy warriors, and filibusters of Kurdistan—that the army of Anatolia, is nothing like the staid, disciplined and drilled army of Roumelia, where the commander knows how many and what men he has from day to day under his command, and where the thirst for independent adventure and private plunder is held under check by articles of war and courts martial.’
that of articles in many liberal publications, as the main military evaluation of ‘The Four Armies in the Crimea’ in the \textit{Grenzboten} made plain. Turkish soldiers were ‘in and for themselves incomparably superior’ to their Russian counterparts, capable of fitting into ‘any tactical formation’, the correspondent maintained, denying ‘that, in saying this, I am letting myself be affected by considerations of partiality’.\textsuperscript{284} Likewise, the Ottoman artilleryman, trained by Prussian officers, ‘aims better than the Russian’, as ‘has been said too often in recent times, so that it must seem redundant to add anything else here’.\textsuperscript{285} In this type of report, Turkish troops were treated in a matter-of-fact way alongside Russian, French, and British ones.

At the same time, however, they were cast as ‘oriental’ objects of European fantasy, transforming the Crimean War into a distant adventure comparable to a colonial expedition.\textsuperscript{286} The \textit{Historisch-politische Blätter} was not alone in lamenting the unwillingness of ‘our German Publizistik’ to acknowledge that ‘at least America belongs to the questions of European politics, not to mention Asia’.\textsuperscript{287} The affairs of Asia were widely believed to be distinct and distant from those of Europe, as the article’s own description of Russia’s and Britain’s global interests—which would constitute the ‘main act of the history of the second half of the nineteenth century’—spelled out, with references to Turkish Armenia and Persia, ‘the steppes of the Tartar and Kyrgyz hordes of Central Asia’, ‘the tents of the Khans of Khiva, Bukhara and Kabul’, ‘the mountain passes of the Afghans’, ‘the northwest frontier of India’, and the ‘great military site of Bombay’.\textsuperscript{288} One early article in the \textit{Gartenlaube} on ‘Turkish Soldiers’, which also conceded that regular troops—from a large total force of 388,260—were ‘well trained’ and ‘used to strict discipline’ and that officers were ‘very well-informed’ and artillery ‘excellent’, recorded that the soldiers were ‘funny, jovial chaps, and one can think of no better travelling companion’.\textsuperscript{289} ‘Each wears his Stambul fez like a humorous \textit{Bursche} and the blue tassels never rest because of their liveliness,’ the article continued, before going on to describe the exotic uniform of the soldiers in fetishistic detail: ‘Tights are not in fashion, so a part of the foot always peeps out [of their shoes], but they are always well washed.’\textsuperscript{290} Such regular troops were portrayed, in words and etchings, beside turban-wearing, mounted Kurds, ‘some of whom serve in the Russian, some in the Asiatic-Turkish and some in their own robber armies’, or next to fearsome, muscular bashi-bazouks, who functioned as a form of \textit{Landsturm} but ‘whole masses of

\textsuperscript{285} Ibid., 369.  
\textsuperscript{287} \textit{Historisch-politische Blätter}, 1854, vol. 33, no. 1, 529. There were very occasional references to ‘world powers’ such as the United States and Russia at the time of the Crimean War: see, for instance, ‘Rundschauerlicher Traum’, \textit{Kladderadatsch}, 1854, vol. 7, 212.  
\textsuperscript{290} Ibid.
whom deserted not exactly rarely’ and ‘roamed around . . . as robbers’.291 ‘Irregular Turkish Military’ were shown as medieval horsemen (see Figure 5.3).292 As they and their horses waded through a river in a long, arcing column, with the snow-peaked mountains of Asia Minor behind them, the Kurds looked like figures from biblical story or Arabic legend.293 For their part, the bashi-bazouks were depicted as a single, organic, corporeal mass, similar to drawings of Africans, looking on menacingly and proudly from a mountain ridge.294

These anthropological studies of different tribal warriors were supplemented by travel tales of local folklore, topography, peoples, and women, from Georgians, who were ‘thin and of the purest proportions, with their chiselled faces and large, enthusiastically shining eyes’, via ‘the most beautiful girls’ in Wallachia, who supposedly lived far from the ‘corruption’ of Bucharest, to Turkish women, who ‘aroused our curiosity’ with their veils and their public silence but who were also shown in the ‘oriental’ fantasy of the Sultan’s harem.295 Readers were presented with ‘pictures’ of Belgrade, Varna, Sevastopol, Odessa, Kars, Erzerum, and the Balkans and its mountain fastnesses.296 One article in Gartenlaube promised ‘Turkish Reflections’, including ‘walks’, ‘the Balkans with its narrow passes’, ‘the Turk with the Christian coat’, ‘the trading of women’, ‘Turkish bachelorhood and family life’.297 It began by inviting ‘our readers to accompany us on some walks.

293 Ibid., 1855, vol. 36, 471.
294 Ibid., 1855, vol. 27, 361.
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into the interior of Turkish mores and morals; that is, into those circles on which the “oriental question” largely hinges.298 Another article offered a short history and geographical exploration of ‘The Crimean Peninsula’, which ‘even without war, without the English, French and Russians in soldiers’ uniforms, is interesting enough’, as the old ‘seat of the Tartar Empire of the Mongols’, who ‘once used to dominate the whole of Asia’, and as the site of classical ruins and Christian sects.299 Sticking out into the Black Sea, the peninsula was as large as Saxony, Hanover, Württemberg, and Baden combined, with three-quarters of the territory covered by steppe and one-quarter, on the south coast, an ‘attractive mountain land’ called ‘the Russian Switzerland’, noted a guide to ‘Rambling in the Crimea’ in late 1854.300 The juxtaposition of and alternation between these types of exotic travelogue and war reports within periodicals and, to a lesser extent, newspapers turned an alien land and culture into a source of fascination and attraction rather than of fear, it appeared.301 Even gruesome accounts of military killing and hardship such as ‘Scenes from the Anglo-French Winter Camp in the Crimea’, which was published in the Gartenlaube in early 1855, often couched their depictions of corpses—on the battlefield of Inkerman in this case—and ‘the dirt, terror, hospitals, graves, dead, dying [and] the stink’ of camps (Balaklava) within the conceit of ‘a short hike’, a trip along a ‘road’, or a voyage.302

By contrast to Turkey, Russia was regularly perceived to be a familiar European power rather than an exotic extra-European one.303 Until 1848, it had been the guarantor of the Holy Alliance, joining Austrian forces to defeat Hungarian ‘revolutionaries’ in 1849. Many newspapers reprinted articles from the Russian press, casting the campaign from St Petersberg’s point of view and referring to the fortunes of ‘our’ Russian soldiers. On the left, Engels was unambiguous in viewing the tsarist regime as ‘our enemy’, which had to be looked at ‘straight in the face to see what sort of an opponent he may turn out to be’, but he also acknowledged that ‘the composition and organisation of the Russian army is known well enough to military men all over Europe’, with ‘a good deal of valuable matter in our western literatures which requires nothing but sifting and combining’, in spite of the existence of ‘the most contradictory opinions as to [its] real military strength and capabilities’, ‘overrated by some, underrated by others’.304 ‘The actual difficulty is merely to know how far this organisation’, which was based on an imitation of that introduced in France by Napoleon I, ‘has been really carried out, how much of this

298 Ibid., 500.
301 For such juxtaposition in other periodicals, see ‘Sevastopol’, Grenzboten, 1854, vol. 13, no. 4, 281–8.
303 For German representations of Russia, see V. G. Luljevicius, The German Myth of the East, 44–97; M. Keller (ed.), Russen und Russland aus deutscher Sicht, vol. 3. For more on Russian perceptions and experiences of the war, see—in addition to Figes’s work—J. S. Curtiss, Russia’s Crimean War (Durham, NC, 1979).
army exists not merely on paper but can be brought forward against a foreign foe’, the journalist and industrialist went on. In principle, at least, Russian forces were large, with 750,000 troops according to Marx and Engels in 1855 (historians now estimate 1.2 million in total), of which only one-third were stationed in the Crimea and two-thirds were ‘deployed to menace Austria’. As for many of his contemporaries, war was reduced for Engels to the status of a European strategic game, reminiscent of 1812:

And there are people who believe that Nicholas will sue for peace if Sevastopol be taken! Why, Russia has not played one-third of her trumps yet, and the momentary loss of Sevastopol and of the fleet is hardly felt at all by the giant to whom Sevastopol and he felt were but a plaything. Russia knows full well that her decisive action does not lie along the sea shores or within reach of disembarking troops; but on the contrary, on the broad interior of the Continent, where massive armies can be brought to act concentrated on one spot, without frittering away their forces in a fruitless coast defence against evanescent enemies. Russia may lose the Crimea, the Caucasus, Finland, St Petersburg and all such appendages; but as long as her body, with Moscow for its heart, and fortified Poland for its sword-arm, is untouched, she need not give in an iota.

The grand actions of 1854 are, we dare say, but the petty preludes of the battles of nations which will mark the annals of 1855. It is not until the great Russian army of the west, and the Austrian army come into play, no matter whether against each other or with each other, that we shall see real war on a large scale, something like the grand wars of Napoleon. And, perhaps, these battles may be the preludes merely of other battles far more fierce, far more decisive—the battles of the European peoples against the now victorious and secure European despots.

In theory, ‘the continental force launched against Russia’ was stronger in 1854 than in 1812, with Britain on France’s and Austria’s side, not Russia’s. Russia in the latter instance had helped to defend German states. In both instances, it was treated by Marx and Engels as a regular Great Power.

Because of its size, with a land mass of 343,240 square miles compared to the 314,662 square miles of Britain, France, Turkey, and their empires, Russia constituted, for liberal and unaligned publications, a unique site of conflict, with more or less conventional military forces. This positive assessment of the tsarist regime’s forces became more, not less, pronounced as the war continued, partly because of Russian resistance during the siege of Sevastopol, where 65,000 soldiers of the tsar had been killed or wounded by the end of July 1855, before the Allies’

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305 Ibid., 174.
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final assault on the city. Occasionally, the press pointed to the existence of a ‘racial conflict’ between ‘Slavs’ and ‘Germans’, with Austrians fearing ‘the national character of this Great Power [Russia]’, not merely its military forces, in the words of the Allgemeine Zeitung on 7 December 1854, yet the general tenor of newspaper reportage was less stereotypical and more admiring. At the start of the winter of 1854–5, in November, the same publication had underlined the resilience of the Russian troops, against whom ‘the Allies cannot boast of any significant progress until now’: ‘They [the Allies] have underestimated the strength of the defenders and the difficulty of the undertaking’, with the ‘courage and morale’ of the 30,000–35,000 occupiers of Sevastopol ‘unbroken’ and its defences strong. As the Gartenlaube informed its readers, the military fortifications of the port had been designed by a British civil engineer, just as the most opulent of the Crimean palaces of the Russian nobility had been built by a British architect, standing in stark contrast to the wooden huts and freezing living conditions of the British and French armies on the peninsula and begging the question of the two sides’ relative ‘civilization’ and ‘humanity’. Initially, in November 1854, the Grenzboten had, its military expert conceded, underestimated the strength of the Russian army, emphasizing the ‘parade-ground’ discipline of its peasant soldiers at the same time as their ‘slowness and unwieldiness’ in manoeuvres, as they dissolved in disarray under the fire of British artillery. The ‘supplement’ provided by the same correspondent in the spring of 1855 revised these earlier judgements, praising the tsarist regime for introducing a fundamental reform of the artillery in the 1840s, which had proved effective in the Crimea, in spite of the fact that it lay ‘in the nature of the Russian Empire’ to lag behind the institutions of ‘western Europe’. Its infantry had not been reformed, turning the siege of Sevastopol into ‘a school for its army in general’, but it nonetheless remained wedded to the military traditions of the European states, having learned from the battles of Eylau, Borodino and Leipzig during the Napoleonic Wars. Unlike in the campaigns of 1812–15, ‘Cossacks’ were the subject of few reports and, when they did feature, they were often portrayed in an exotic, unmenacing fashion. In such articles, the forces, tactics, and armaments of Russia were compared straightforwardly to those of the other Great Powers.

310 O. Figes, Crimea, 376–7.
311 Allgemeine Zeitung, 7 Dec. 1854. Racial stereotypes remained one element of press reportage, of course, more evident in cartoons than in newspaper reports: see, for instance, ‘Der versteckte Freund und einzige Bundesgenosse Rußlands von 1812’, Kladderadatsch, 1854, vol. 7, 180, or ‘Illustrierte Zeitungs-Nachrichten’, ibid., 196, which showed a row of characters with stereotypical ‘Asiatic’ features—with narrow eyes, pig-like or bulbous noses, and long beards—above a caption from the journal de Constantinople, referring to the ‘difficult task’ of ‘distinguishing between officers and rank-and-file soldiers amongst the captured Russians’.
312 Allgemeine Zeitung, 7 Nov. 1854.
315 Ibid., 1855, vol. 13, no. 4, 58–63.
To German and Austrian newspaper readers, the Crimean War combined the familiarity of a European crisis with a cast of well-known actors, which had the potential to spread to central and western theatres of war, on the one hand, and an unknown, exotic location, where adventurous or visibly modern forms of combat were being tested and were being covered by the press in a novel way, on the other. In some respects, the exploitation of new technologies of warfare marked out the Crimean campaign from previous wars. More destructive, accurate, and longer-range bullets and shells increased the need for skirmishers and protected positions and reduced the role of infantry formations, hand-to-hand fighting, and cavalry charges, as well as producing more deadly, gruesome wounds and more efficacious medical means of treating such wounds. Steamships criss-crossed the Mediterranean and Black Sea, the routes and ports of which were displayed on countless maps, making a ‘European’ war—rather than a colonial one, using troops already stationed abroad (in the American War of Independence or the Napoleonic Wars, for instance)—possible for the first time.

From Varna on the Black Sea Coast of European Turkey, where the British and French armies had massed troops in the summer of 1854, to the port of Balaklava was a journey of just two days, giving the town the atmosphere of a staging post, wrote Julius von Wickede, who was in transit with the Chasseurs d’Afrique from Algeria. On 7 September, 400 Allied ships led by HMS *Agamemnon*, the Royal Navy’s first screw-propelled steamship, set out from the port of Varna bound for the Crimea ‘like a vast industrial city on the waters’, according to a French observer. ‘In the struggle, which threatens to unfold between the European western powers (*Westmächte*) and the Empire of Russia at this time, the art of war appears on the battle scene for the first time with means of violence which have never been seen in previous struggles,’ one correspondent had written in the *Gartenlaube*, beneath a detailed cross-section of ‘The Propeller-Driven Warship Wellington’, early in 1854:

We mean the powerful steam-propelled war fleets, and especially the huge propeller-driven steamers which now plough through the seas and which scarcely allow a means

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320. For typical maps, see *Die Presse*, 26 Sept. 1854, or ‘Übersicht des Kriegsschauplatzes’, *Gartenlaube*, 1854, vol. 51, 600–1. The *Algemeine Zeitung*’s military correspondent cautioned on 24 Oct. 1854 only that ‘It must now have become clear to a wider public through the course [of the embarkation] that it is impossible, even under the most favourable conditions, to ship across armies which are completely ready for war.’ By implication, armies could be transported which were largely ready for war.


of resistance to be imagined, given the speed and strength of their attack. The ele-
mental dangers of the sea are more or less vanquished by these steam colossuses.323

Yet the destructive potential of such new machines of war was not unleashed,
with the Russian fleet remaining in the harbour of Sevastopol where it was des-
troyed during the siege. Likewise, although the changes wrought by artillery and
munitions were recognized, with corresponding use of trenches and protected
positions, their full effects were rarely disclosed to a reading public. The nature and
extent of shrapnel and bullet wounds were made public infrequently, despite being
described more regularly than in the past, following the example of journalists such
as William Howard Russell in The Times.324 The use of trenches and artillery was
generally incorporated into analyses of siege warfare, with Sevastopol understood
to have been ‘built for offensive defence’ and as a form of ‘reinforced battlefield’,
which could be compared to that used by the French defenders of Danzig in
1813.325 Thus, the Grenzboten, notwithstanding its fear that trench warfare had
filled ‘Sevastopol’s wide field of the dead with new corpses’, contrasted the Allies’
bombardment of and half-hearted attacks on Sevastopol unfavourably with the
French assault on Tarragona in 1811.326 The human cost of the conflict, with a
dozen murderous struggles in 1855 replacing the Napoleonic idea of ‘a single, con-
centrated, genuine assault’, was roughly the same as that of its predecessors, it was
implied.327

The true cost of the Crimean War was only revealed occasionally and partially to
a German or an Austrian public. Kladderadatsch portrayed the consequences of
artillery bombardments and senseless killing, most visible in the chaotic debris and
figures of death in ‘What the Franco-English Commission Found as It Drew Up an
Inventory of Materials at Sevastopol’ (1855), yet it more frequently depicted the
events in the Crimea as a diplomatic game or a more or less harmless fight between
statesmen, national characters, children, or, in one instance, deep-sea divers, who
were shown picking up cannon balls from the seabed in order to ‘bring this usable
munition via Balaklava back to the batteries’.328 Another cartoon imagined a giant
cannon, typical of the siege of Sevastopol, as a ‘hearing-aid for those who don’t want
to hear’.329 Few lithographs showed dead or wounded soldiers and those which did,
such as the drawing of ‘French Sharpshooters in Their Field Entrenchments’ in
Gartenlaube in 1854, often covered or obscured the bodies.330 Most pictures

324 See especially A. Lambert and S. Badesy (eds), The War Correspondents: The Crimean War; S.
Markovits, The Crimean War in the British Imagination; F. Becker, ‘Der “vorgeschobene Posten” als
”verlorenen Posten”? William Howard Russell und die britische Berichterstattung vom Krimkrieg’, in
G. Maag, W. Pyta, and M. Windisch (eds), Der Krimkrieg als erster europäischer Medienkrieg, 221–34.
327 Ibid., 402.
328 ‘Was die Französisch-Englische Commission vorfand, als sie das Inventarium des Materials von
Sebastopol aufnahm’, Kladderadatsch, 1855, vol. 8, 180; ‘Zur orientalischen Frage’, ibid., 1854, vol. 7,
228; ‘Ein schlauer Junge!’, ibid., 1854, vol. 7, 216.
displayed the topography and cultural sites of the various expeditions and the bloodless operations of small groups of soldiers. Three-dimensional maps and aerial views of cities gave readers the impression that they were reconnoitring the scene of a future battle, revealing—in ‘Sevastopol’ (1854) and ‘Siege Plan of Sevastopol’ (1854), for instance—the hills, cliffs, escarpments, encampments, army formations, and fortifications surrounding the enclosed harbour in overstated relief in order to suggest the romance of the setting and the entrapment of the Russian fleet (see Figure 5.4).331 In ‘The Crimea from a Bird’s Eye View’ (1855), the peninsula protruded outwards towards the viewer, hinting at the vast plains of Russia behind, while in ‘Pressed Overview Map of the Russian–Turkish War Setting’ (1855), the region was portrayed as an organic, rocky integument on which humans would struggle to leave a mark.332 Other lithographs—such as ‘Balaklava (the old Chersonesus)’ (1854)—presented landscapes in the Romantic tradition.333 They were juxtaposed with anthropological images of local peoples and heroic, sometimes mythical ones of soldiers, visible in ‘The French Garde-Cuirassiers’ (1855), in which they were likened to bearded Germanic gods, and in ‘Chasseurs d’Afrique at an Outpost’ (1855), where a winding, muscular column of French cavalry made its way along a narrow path around an outcrop of rock.334 The fascination and adventure of combat overshadowed suffering in these representations. The realities of modern warfare involving ‘Germans’ in Europe, as Austria went to war with France

331 Ibid., vol. 30, 354, and vol. 50, 609.  
332 Ibid., 1855, vol. 15, 200, and vol. 39, 518.  
333 Ibid., vol. 44, 531.  
334 Ibid., 1855, vol. 41, 543; ibid., 1856, vol. 1, 5.
and Piedmont in northern Italy in 1859, and ‘Germans’ abroad, as German-speaking correspondents wrote about their experiences of the American Civil War in the early 1860s, tested such heroic mythology more fully.

MODERN WARFARE: THE FRANCO-AUSTRIAN WAR (1859)

Technological, strategic, tactical, and moral changes in the waging of wars during the mid-nineteenth century were likely to have more of an impact in those conflicts involving ‘German’ soldiers. To a limited extent, an ‘internal’ view of the American Civil War was provided by correspondents from the German-speaking communities of the northern states (with references to ‘our’ troops), helping to ensure that admirers of the South such as Heinrich Marquardsen—a lawyer in Erlangen writing for the Kölnerische Zeitung—were outnumbered by supporters of the North such as the Cologne newspaper’s regular reporter in New York, Friedrich Kapp.335 This form of identification and dissemination occurred more frequently during the Habsburg monarchy’s war in northern Italy against France and Piedmont-Sardinia in 1859, when even newspapers traditionally sceptical of Austria and sympathetic to Prussia like the semi-official Badische Landeszeitung noted ‘the patriotic spirit’ permeating ‘the whole of Germany’.336 Other pro-Prussian publications such as the National-Zeitung (Berlin) and Grenzboten (Leipzig) pointed to the ‘agitated mood that today grips the German people’, as Vienna strove to secure ‘a significant role for our great nation in this European drama’.337 Southern German newspapers such as the Catholic, pro-Austrian Freiburger Zeitung tended to be considerably more positive, declaring as early as January, as the opposing powers jostled for position and threatened the use of force, that ‘There are no longer democrats and ultramontanes, backward-looking men and a revolutionary party, but only Germans who are ready to mount a common defence when danger and disadvantage threaten the whole fatherland.’338 In common with many observers in 1859, Guido von Usedom, the Prussian delegate at the Bundestag


337 National-Zeitung, 27 May 1859; Grenzboten, 1859, vol. 18, 277. See the attempts of even the conservative Neue Preußische Zeitung, 13 Mar. and 15 Apr. 1859, to present itself as the champion of national affairs, which were linked to the international position of the Habsburg monarchy.

in Frankfurt, was convinced that ‘the whole of South Germany is mad about Austria’ and ‘identifies Austria with Germany’, appearing to push their reluctant governments towards war.339 Such support seemed to encourage both commentators and readers to empathize with German–Austrian combatants.

As was to be expected, empathy was most pronounced in the Austrian press, which remained influential amongst the political elites of the German lands and whose articles were reprinted in German newspapers. The Habsburg Foreign Minister Karl Ferdinand von Buol-Schauenstein was so confident of the proximity of German and Austrian public opinion in 1859 that he predicted that ‘all Germany’ would ‘gather round a hard-pressed Austria’, even if it were defeated.340 At various points, the ‘Franco-Sardinian’ campaign was portrayed, not merely as a war against the Habsburg monarchy, but ‘an attack on Germany’.341 As the prospects of the war worsened, Austrian journalists became more convinced than ever that ‘the ramifications of the event for Germany appear to be profound and powerful’.342 The representation of events by the press in Austria was favourable to the Habsburg regime and army, designed in part to garner support in the German states and to push German governments to mobilize the troops of the Bund.343 After the battle of Magenta on 4 June, which issued in a decisive victory for France and Sardinia, the main liberal Viennese newspaper Die Presse cast around for positive news. ‘French reports about the battle of Magenta already sound more modest,’ began one article on 11 June: “They all agree that the fighting has demanded terrible sacrifices from the French.”344 The figures provided by one newspaper (L’Indépendance)—3,000 French dead, 9,000 wounded, and 1,000 captured, which proved to be three to five times too high and which masked Austrian losses twice as great as those of the French and Piedmontese —were seized on as proof that the enemy’s victory had been costly and precarious, assured only by MacMahon’s arrival at the last minute, preventing an Austrian flanking manoeuvre.345 The suffering on both sides, even though it was ‘not yet possible from official reports and other details to date to give a clear picture’, had evidently been ‘terribly murderous’.346 By the end of ‘the first act of this bloody drama of war’, commented another lead article on 12 June, ‘events have taken a different

341 Die Presse, 27 June 1859. See also Bohemia (Prague), 13 Jan. and 3 May 1859, and the conservative Oesterreichischer Volksfreund, 13 Jan. 1859, which called on the support of ‘the entirety of the German nation’. For an historical justification of the Habsburg monarchy’s ‘German’ role in Italy and elsewhere, see the historian Ottokar Lorenz’s Österreichs Politik in Italien und die wahren Garantien seiner Macht und Einheit (Vienna, 1859).
342 Die Presse, 28 June 1859. The liberal Telegraf (Graz), 28 Sept. 1859, cited in N. Buschmann, Einkreisung und Waffenbruderschaft, 155–6, commented after the event that southern Germans, in particular, had treated Austrian soldiers, including Galician, Czech, and Illyrian ones, ‘not as foreigners or as good neighbours, but as brothers’.
343 The Oesterreichischer Volksfreund, 15 July 1859, talked of ‘the beautiful and great vocation’ of spilling blood for the monarchy even after Solferino and the armistice of Villafranca on 12 July.
344 Die Presse, 11 June 1859.
345 Ibid. 346 Ibid.
course from that which we expected, and there has never been a more serious moment for our oft-tested land', but 'our army' had nonetheless done ‘everything that daring and a lion’s courage could do on their own’, despite leaving ‘a great, rich province [Lombardy] to the Franco-Sardinian army, which must now be reconquered with the sword’.347

When news of Austria’s decisive defeat at the battle of Solferino on 24 June began to filter through to Vienna by the end of the month, after days without telegrams or official information, the death toll of the war became impossible to ignore. ‘The losses are enormous and Verona is spilling over with wounded’, recorded one ‘very laconic piece of correspondence’ on 30 June: ‘Those troops who were active defended Solferino house by house from 10 o’clock in the morning until 8 o’clock in the evening, using bayonets and the butts of their guns, since their munition had run out, and at least three times as large a number of the enemy opposed them.’348 On the evening of the same day, Die Presse finally received and printed the fuller report of its own correspondent, which provided more details of the battle and revealed how artillery had been used to devastating effect in hilly terrain, where ‘each step forwards’ had to be ‘bought with rivers of blood’, resulting in ‘over 20,000 men killed and wounded’ on Austria’s side.349 Napoleon III’s communication to his own army, in which he congratulated his soldiers for repelling ‘the efforts of 150,000 men’, was printed in the Viennese newspaper without further comment.350 By the next day, it had become apparent that the French and Piedmontese had won a ‘victory’, although ‘only with important losses, which were also great on our side’.351 On 4 July, the newspaper’s correspondent continued to ignore the consequences of the Habsburg forces’ defeat, passing on ‘the decision of the army leadership . . . to give up the Mincio line and to adopt a defensive position near Verona’, but the same publication had begun to publish long lists of dead and wounded Austrian officers (by name) and soldiers (by number only), which made the extent of the defeat obvious for the first time.352 The entire second army was, ‘as a result of the sick, dead, wounded and missing, unfortunately about half as strong as before’.353 The empathy, anxiety, and pathos, as well as the ignorance, deceptions, and obfuscations, of such reportage could easily be detected by readers.

Given the effects of artillery and sharpshooters during the Crimean War, the conditions facing combatants in 1859 were foreseeable, even if the ‘new factors’ of warfare—including the telegraph and ‘steam on water and land’—were ‘still partly unknown and scarcely studied in theory’, in the words of the official Oesterreichische Zeitung on 21 June 1859.354 Modern combat tore ‘the manly, youthful strength of the peoples from the arms of their loved ones and from useful work’ and pushed

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347 Ibid., 12 June 1859.  348 Ibid., 30 June 1859.
349 Ibid., Abendblatt, 30 June 1859.  350 Ibid.
351 Ibid., 1 July 1859.  352 Ibid., 4 July 1859.  353 Ibid.
conscripts, ‘with drums and whistles, into the chemically and scientifically studied sphere of war, which spread the instruments of murder afar’, leaving thousands dead and ‘peace’ to be concluded by generals over the bodies of ‘cripples and the dismembered’, lamented the democratic Beobachter (Stuttgart) in May 1859: ‘A modern war like this stands before us.’355 In the ensuing conflict in northern Italy, the consequences of such warfare were occasionally revealed to a mass readership. Thus, one instalment of the Gartenlaube’s ‘Original Communications from the War Front’ gave an account, in the words of its sub-title, of ‘the smell of Montebello’ and of a ‘visit to the battlefield of Palestro’ with French forces:

If we see a corpse, especially someone murdered, in civilian life amongst peaceful people, and the murderer in front of a court,…no one can very easily guard against a shudder of horror. It is always somewhat shocking. A dead body! Yet hundreds of dismembered and dead bodies around us daily—that is something quite different. One gets used to the horrors of war and takes the hundreds and thousands of those who have been smashed to pieces, even if one sees them at all, as something inevitable, which is self-evident. Even the terrible, tortured, mass death of the wounded appear for those around as for those suffering and dying to become a form of business which one must view and oversee in the coldest blood possible. In Alessandria, I saw long caravans of the wounded and those who died in transit coming from the battle of Montebello, with enough material for the most distressing and cruellest scenes for an entire century of novels, yet those who were lightly wounded sang, smoked and laughed like people who were bringing funny goods to an annual fair. They turned and wrestled and jabbered heart-wrenchingly on their stretchers; others lay completely still and fixed and were dead; but the lightly wounded next to them, who could still make their way, limped and laughed and smoked and sang at their side, and made humorous, well-meaning comments about those who had become completely still. A zouave with one smashed leg and one intact one played the formal joker in their midst.

I wasn’t able to enter Montebello itself. I was driven far away by a bitterly repellent, unconquerable force: by the smell of the fallen, who had been buried in their hundreds in hastily dug, rectangular pits, densely piled on top of one another and had only been loosely covered by a thin layer of soil—so thin that, as man explained to me on the road, the rain overnight had uncovered heads with fluttering hair and protruding arms and legs, so that grim, frozen faces stared at the sky with white, dead eyes.356 Such ‘slaughter’ was presented by the correspondent of the Gartenlaube as proof of the horrors of modern warfare, with ‘the scenes of street fighting and “house wars” . . . sometimes as disgusting and bloody, as fanatical and ruthless as the cruellest instances of revolutionary fighting’.357 To the satirical journal Kladderadatsch, the battles of Magenta and Solferino were feathers in the cap of the grim reaper, the ally of all ‘liberators and civilizers’, who—to the relief of all—was ‘now resting from his exertions’.358

355 Beobachter, 19 May 1859, cited in Buschmann, Einkreisung und Waffenbruderschaft, 79.
357 Ibid., 430.
358 Zum Friedens-Abschluß, Kladderadatsch, vol. 12, no. 33, 17 July 1859, 132, depicted the symbol of death in one panel, topped by a greedy, corpulent, comic Napoleon III, whose eyes were ‘bigger than his belly’, and a vainglorious ‘new Italian freedom’, half bound to France (Lombardy) and half to Austria (Venice), and dressed half in the military garb of one and half of the other.
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The battle of Solferino became famous because it gave rise to the signature of the first Geneva Convention in 1864 and the founding of the International Committee for Relief to the Wounded in 1863 (becoming the International Committee of the Red Cross in 1876), after the publication in 1862 of Jean Henri Dunant’s Un Souvenir de Solférino, which exposed the conditions experienced by wounded soldiers. Like German coverage of the American Civil War, which eventually saw 2.64 million men in arms and up to one-fifth of combatants killed, press reportage of the war between France, Sardinia, and Austria included few exposés of the effects of modern combat. Military conflict continued to be represented—and, as far as historians can judge, to be understood—as an heroic adventure. There were various reasons why the Habsburg monarchy’s war in northern Italy in 1859 did not lead to the abandonment of this conception of military conflict in the German lands. One concerned the unexpectedly short duration of the conflict. Most journalists had foreseen a longer war, which had the potential to become a protracted European conflagration, as the Gartenlaube noted:

The peoples of Europe have become something like a single people, through work and trade, railways and telegraphs, and thousands of daily contacts of material and ideal acts of communication. They are a single societal body which suffers as a whole, if it is disturbed, wounded or infected in one of its parts. This is why we all feel, despite the fact that the war has been ‘localized’ in an exemplary way until now, the misery of it. Now, every war more or less takes on the form and the curse of a civil war. Now, the philistine can no longer praise himself for holding forth on Sundays and holidays about war and calls for war when, far away in Turkey, the peoples are fighting with each other. The most distant and most localized war concerns his life and his pocket.

The rapid ending of what one journalist of the Grenzboten predicted, at the outbreak of hostilities, would become ‘at least a European war’ and perhaps ‘a new thirty years’ war’ took most commentators by surprise. On 7 June, after defeat on the 4th at Magenta, which was still being referred to six days later as an ‘alleged defeat’, the Kreuzezeitung could be found reiterating the assurance of the Kölnische Zeitung’s correspondent in Vienna on 1 June that Austrian reinforcements were on their way to Italy. Following the abandonment of Milan a fortnight earlier, the conservative publication prophesied on 21 June, via the reprinting of an article from the Militär-Zeitung (Vienna), that the Habsburg forces would soon return.


362 Neue Preußische Zeitung, 7 June 1859. On Magenta, see ibid., 10 June 1859.

363 Ibid., 21 June 1859.
On 24 June, the day of the battle of Solferino, the newspaper merely declared that the ‘first act’ of the war was over, with Austria’s early defeats the consequence of bad luck and poor information.\footnote{Ibid., 24 June 1859.} The Habsburg army still seemed stronger than those of its enemies. After the gravity of the monarchy’s defeat at Solferino had become clear and the armistice of Villafranca had been agreed on 12 July, the \textit{Neue Preußische Zeitung}’s main question was whether ‘this pause was the beginning of peace or . . . the calm before a greater storm’.\footnote{Ibid., 13 July 1859. The losses in both camps were said to be ‘significant’ and ‘undoubted’.} The conservative mouthpiece found it difficult, like many German newspapers and periodicals, to accept that the war was over.\footnote{The Kölnische Zeitung’s response to Austria’s defeat and Cavour’s subsequent resignation was ‘Eine Überraschung folgt der andern’, cited in K. Buchheim, \textit{Die Geschichte der Kölnischen Zeitung}, vol. 4, 104.} ‘The whole of Europe was transported into a state of almost incomparable wonderment by the news that the peace of Villafranca had been signed’, stated the principal correspondent of the conflict in the national–liberal \textit{Preußische Jahrbücher} at the end of the war, before going on to provide hasty explanations of it; lack of finances, Hungarian opposition to Vienna, and Austrian anxiety about Prussia’s imminent, self-interested involvement.\footnote{‘Frankreich, Oesterreich und der Krieg in Italien’, \textit{Preußische Jahrbücher}, 1859, vol. 4, 609. See also Grenzboten, 1859, vol. 3, 117, for a similar report.} Under such circumstances, there was little opportunity for publications to print accounts of soldiers’ experiences of the fighting.

Much of the press coverage of the war was strategic and technical, tracking the advances and retreats of the different armies by telegraph and furnishing detailed reports of their tactics, deployments, and use of weaponry. From these points of view, it seemed to many correspondents that the campaign was comparable to those of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars. Thus, although it was true—as could be seen ‘from the reports on the war in the Crimea (which was only a siege war for the most part)—that the art of war has developed to a point at which troops trained with the new methods could only be opposed with difficulty or not at all—over the long term—through the use of the old methods’, modern warfare appeared to require the extension of Napoleonic techniques, in the words of the main editorial on the Franco-Austrian War in the \textit{Neue Preußische Zeitung}: namely, ‘a speed of movement which is very difficult to achieve without particular exercises of this kind’; the ability of infantry, who played ‘a great part in the new method’, to manoeuvre quickly and then suddenly to stand their ground and to discharge their guns steadily under enemy fire; and the willingness of armies—like Wellington in Spain after 1808—to find and defend fixed positions and strongholds.\footnote{Diplomatisch-militärischer Kriegsschauplatz’, \textit{Neue Preußische Zeitung}, 23 June 1859.} French forces in Spain, as elsewhere, had had the advantage of speed during the Napoleonic Wars, which other armies had had to imitate and counter.\footnote{Ibid.} This imperative seemed simply to have increased in the more ‘modern’ campaigns of Napoleon III. The battle of Magenta, the ‘first major battle in the new Austrian–French war’, had taken place on 4 June, ten days before the fifty-ninth anniversary of the ‘famous
battle of Marengo', ‘by means of which the first Napoleon commenced his
triumphs’, wrote the local, conservative Teiltower Kreisblatt on 11 June 1859: ‘The
battle at Magenta was bloody but it cannot be seen to be as important as the battle
of Marengo once was. The actual work remains to be done.’370

Although the precise movements and positions differed, with French forces
advancing from the East at Montebello in 1859 and from the West in 1800 for
example, the terrain and tactics of the war were similar, with MacMahon concen-
trating ‘all his strength on the right flank of the Austrians’ at Magenta, just as the
French had once done at Marengo for Napoleon I, in the recollection of the
Grenzboten.371 In 1796, the French ‘Army of Italy’ had stood opposite its Austrian
counterpart on the Riviera, making its way under Napoleon I across northern
Italy in the following months.372 Now, ‘Napoleon III has, in fact, more chance of
imitating the campaign of 1796 and 1797 than seems at first sight to be the case
as things stand in Austria and in Germany’, warned the military correspondent of
the Grenzboten on 25 May 1859.373 ‘The fact—in contrast to the speed and
decisiveness—of Austria’s defeat at Solferino came as no surprise to the same jour-
nalist, reminding him of the battle of Castiglione in 1796.374 ‘We know that this
battle was one of the most enormous and bloody of the entire nineteenth cen-
tury’, with each side leading ‘at least 150,000 men into battle’ and leaving ‘about
20,000 men each, dead and wounded, on the field’, yet such losses were the same
as those of the Napoleonic Wars.375 They were in keeping with the monarchy’s
initial mobilization of 650,000 men and an ‘external’ deployment of up to
450,000 at the start of the campaign, which betrayed ‘a strength such as has only
been mustered rarely in European wars before’ but which had been exceeded by
the Coalition’s forces in 1813–15.376 In the Grenzboten and other German publi-
cations, the war of 1859 was compared in its entirety to the campaigns of 1796–7,
1800, 1813–15, and, even, 1848–9.377 Though sometimes described as ‘new’, it
appeared to differ in detail alone from earlier military conflicts.

As in previous wars, German and Austrian newspapers presented to their readers
a contradictory series of reports of events gleaned from official sources, military
journals, and German-language and foreign publications. One article in the Neue
Preußische Zeitung talked of ‘collecting’ all available news in order to arrive at a
clearer view of what was happening at ‘the scene of the war’.378 Because the conflict
lasted just over two months, there was little opportunity for periodicals to counter
newspapers’ breathless dissemination of information by means of analysis or
eyewitness accounts. Even Viennese newspapers with contacts in the Habsburg
government and army were frequently obliged to reprint and interpret French
reports on the various battles, expressing relief after the battle of Magenta when the

372 Ibid., 387. 373 Ausblüche auf den Kriegsschauplatz’, ibid., 390.
374 Ibid., vol. 18, no. 3, 80. 375 Ibid.
377 For references to 1848–9, see ‘Der Krieg in Italien 1848–1849’, ibid., 1859, vol. 18, no. 2, 518–19; ibid., vol. 18, no. 3, 19.
Parisian press became ‘moderate’ or when it showed—for instance, on 27 June, via the account of an officer in the French General Staff—the doggedness of Austrian resistance. Sometimes, Die Presse was reduced to ‘guesses about the position of the Austrian army’, given the lack of news arriving by telegraph. At other times, after brief notifications of the battle of Solferino by telegraph had not been corroborated by posted statements from its own correspondents, the newspaper was compelled—for the intervening week—to rely on the Piedmontese, British, and French press, the disclosures of which had been relayed by the Kölnische Zeitung and other German publications with well-developed networks of correspondents. ‘Today, too, we have not received further details of the battle of the 24th of this month’, admitted the lead article ‘From the Scene of War’ on 28 June: ‘The KZ writes of the first impressions [of the battle] in the news in Paris’ that the ‘fighting must have been terrible and pertinacious, as is shown by its duration alone (16 hours).’ When the Viennese publication began to receive articles—initially in fragmentary form—from its own correspondent from 30 June onwards, it continued to print pieces from Le Moniteur alongside them. Thus, the claims of its lead article, from ‘an authentic source’, on 1 July that the French ‘success’ had only been achieved ‘with considerable losses’ were juxtaposed on the front page with the commentary of the Kölnische Zeitung’s Parisian correspondent on an official French report that the Austrians had been ‘chased out of Solferino’. The alleged death of MacMahon was described in parenthesis by the editor as ‘not accurate’. The presses of the other German lands, which had less reason to suppress news from France and Piedmont-Sardinia, put forward a similarly eclectic range of views, convinced, like the Kölnische Zeitung, that the conflict was not one in which ‘Germany can afford to remain indifferent’ but, in many cases, remaining unconvinced that it was ‘a German war’.

There was considerable sympathy in the German lands for the Habsburg monarchy in its war against Napoleonic France. The resulting ‘national feeling’ in Germany, which had been given ‘the most unambiguous expression’ in 1859 according to the Habsburg ambassador in Paris (whose opinion was published in the Heidelberger Journal), was not merely the consequence of what the liberal Hermann Baumgarten described as ‘Austrian agitation in the South’; it was also the product of political aspirations linked to the struggles of 1848 and an antipathy towards Bonapartism or France (see Figure 5.5). Even a sceptic such as Engels admitted that ‘the German nation’ was ‘fairly roused’. In an official dispatch to

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Vienna, the Austrian envoy in Baden was confident that ‘the German nation is beginning to feel its togetherness and its own power’, at least ‘here in the south-west’, where the signs were ‘unmistakable’.388 ‘The war, in which one of the German Great Powers would have a part of its territory torn away from it, is a war of German power and German honour; it is a war against Germany, which all Germans have to fight,’ declared the address of the lower chamber of the Badenese Landtag on 2 May 1859:

And the more powerful the enemy is, which stands opposite us, the more pressing it is that the whole of Germany offers everything in order to meet it with full force. . . . These are the attitudes and opinions which are voiced everywhere in the state and in all classes of the population.389

Even though there was ‘no enthusiasm for Austria at all’ and the ‘ultramontanes and absolutists only play very minor violins’, the ‘rest of the South, the Palatinate and our entire land’, except Heidelberg, was ‘agitated’, in Ludwig Häusser’s evaluation on 14 May: ‘from the Grand Duke [of Baden] to the smallest Palatinate grower of tobacco, there is only one opinion—hatred against Bonaparte, the desire for an Austrian victory, regret concerning Prussia’s fundamental meanness.’390 In Bavaria, the ‘bellicosity of the public’ continued, wrote the liberal historian Heinrich von Sybel on 8 May, with the peasantry, ‘enthused by the clergy’, wanting war ‘today rather than tomorrow’ and with ‘nobles, civil servants and students’ streaming to the regiments, ‘here as in Swabia and Baden’.391 In Prussia, Saxony, Hanover, Hesse, and the Thuringian states, too, ‘the German question’ had again been ‘brought into motion’, in the testimonies of the Hessian liberal Friedrich Oetker and the Saxon Karl Biedermann.392 Many liberals and democrats had ‘warm feelings for Italy and its emancipation from the Austrian yoke, but a concern for Germany lay closer to their hearts’, declared Otto Elben, with everything retracting ‘behind the threatening danger from outside’.393 The ‘menace against Austria’ was widely considered ‘a menace against Germany’, recalling the earlier descent from France’s war against the Habsburg monarchy in 1805 to that against Prussia in 1806.394 As the fighting came closer to ‘the German border in the Tyrol’, the ‘Swabian people’—or their representatives—delivered a proclamation ‘To Our Fellow Citizens’ at the end of June, which constituted ‘the actual beginnings of a national party in Württemberg’.395 In these circumstances, the Stuttgart liberal rejoiced, ‘we national-minded ones’ were joined by ‘those who were later named “Greater German” at a moment of danger’, creating ‘the agreement, it can be said, of the entire country’.396

389 Address of the second chamber of Baden’s Landtag, 2 May 1859, ibid., 91–2.
390 L. Häusser to H. Baumgarten, 14 May 1859, ibid., 90.
393 O. Elben, Lebenserinnerungen 1823–1899 (Stuttgart, 1931), 130.
394 Ibid. 395 Ibid. 396 Ibid., 131.
At the time and later, many contemporaries doubted that such national enthusiasm, which had developed above all in the middling strata during the spring of 1859, betrayed a willingness to go to war or to see the conflict between Austria, France, and Piedmont-Sardinia as their own. Looking back, Elben failed to detect the ‘unanimity of all’ which had been present in 1848 and 1863, on the eve of the war in Schleswig-Holstein.\(^{397}\) Certainly, a large number of Catholic politicians and publicists were in favour of a declaration of war by the German Confederation on the grounds, resting on a broad interpretation of Article 47 of the Viennese Final Acts, that Germany—or the territory of the Bund—was ‘threatened’, even if not subjected to an ‘attack’.\(^{398}\) Correspondingly, periodicals such as the *Historisch-politische Blätter* had championed joint Austrian, Prussian, and confederal action throughout the first half of 1859.\(^{399}\) On this reading of events, which was expounded by the Rhineland Catholic leaders August and Peter Reichensperger, ‘the sympathies of millions’ would ‘accompany and promote the unifying feeling of a common striving’ and would ‘give the German fatherland the courage and power’ to oppose the ‘common enemy in the decisive days ahead’ but also ‘finally to place limits on it’, as they had sought to do in 1859.\(^{400}\) The whole of Germany had opposed an expansionist Bonapartist dictatorship.\(^{401}\) They had also criticized Italian nationalists such as Mazzini and Garibaldi, who had ‘inflicted the deepest wounds on the eternal city’, and Italian statesmen like Cavour, who had ‘come back from Paris in a very pleased mood’ shortly before the outbreak of the war, ‘as the newspapers reported’ at the time.\(^{402}\) Even the Reichensperger brothers, however, conceded that ‘the confusion of facts corresponds to and serves the confusion of ideas’, with ‘nationality, unity, humanity, the localization of war, popular will, non-intervention, freedom, civilisation, progress and those sorts of “principles” clashing with each other and permitting “no clarification”.’\(^{403}\) Conservatives were also troubled by the confusion of these ideas and by conflicting loyalties, dividing between supporters of Austria within the camarilla, a handful of opponents of Austria such as Bismarck-Schönhausen, and a disquieted majority, including Friedrich Julius Stahl and Hermann Wagener, who backed the Prussian government’s policy of armed neutrality.\(^{404}\)

The majority of other commentators, especially those in the North, had little sympathy for the Habsburg monarchy in the Italian war. For radicals such as Arnold Ruge, mindful of earlier persecution under Metternich and counter-revolution

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\(^{397}\) Ibid., 136.

\(^{398}\) A. und P. Reichensperger, *Deutschlands nächste Aufgaben* (Paderborn, 1860), 42.


\(^{401}\) Ibid.

under Schwarzenberg, Prussia, ‘with its objectionable love affair with the police’, was ‘the only salvation for Germany from Jesuits and reactionaries in politics’, who were associated with Austria: ‘If Germany is not now capable of using this position to free itself from Austrian tyranny, it will be wasting another great opportunity. . . . German freedom means separation from Austria.’405 In Bamberger’s opinion, articulated in his anonymously published pamphlet *Juchhe nach Italia!* (1859),

405 The article in *Das Jahrhundert*, 1859, no. 14, is attributed by Hans Rosenberg to Ruge, in *Die nationalpolitische Publizistik Deutschlands* (Munich, 1935), 33. See also H. Simon, *Don Quixote*, C. Vogt,
the Habsburg monarchy was ‘a hundred times deadlier’ than France for German freedom and unity.\textsuperscript{406} German support for Austria was not the result of national sentiment but an artificially produced, sham patriotism or the ‘inculcated roaring of dishonoured subjects’.\textsuperscript{407} The ‘bulwark of German greatness’ lay not on the Po or Mincio Rivers, which had become critical barriers in the military campaign of 1859, but in ‘the final realization’ of ‘German unity’ at home.\textsuperscript{408} ‘Germany’ had only awoken and acknowledged this fact on the edge of the abyss of military conflict, if Bamberger were to be believed. In one of the most famous treatises on the war, entitled \textit{Studien zur gegenwärtigen Lage Europas} (1859), the exiled radical Carl Vogt agreed with Bamberger: the Habsburg monarchy was not a ‘German’ power. Rather, it existed at the expense of nationalities in Italy, Germany, and Eastern Europe, responsible only for ‘a series of outrages against Germany’s unity, honour, reputation, security, freedom, power and greatness’.\textsuperscript{409} The establishment of an independent Italy under Piedmont-Sardinian leadership was to be welcomed by the German Confederation, which ought to remain neutral.\textsuperscript{410} Vogt, like many other radicals, was prepared to go to war, not least because he believed that military conflict would be necessary to establish Italian, Hungarian, and German nation-states at the expense of the Habsburg monarchy:

We call for a mobilization against every attack on Germany, on the development of its people, its national character; against any contravention of its honour or its inner being; but we do not want this to be exploited for self-interested purposes; we want to tear the masks from the faces of the hypocrites and show them that we know how to distinguish between genuine belief and an outrageous abuse of it.\textsuperscript{411}

For more extreme radicals such as Karl Blind, ‘the moment when Lombardy and Venice, Hungary and Galicia will demand state independence’ was ‘most keenly’ desired: ‘We will welcome any true national struggle (\textit{Volkskampf}) of these lands with enthusiasm’.\textsuperscript{412} ‘By declaring ourselves against Parisian tyrants, we are not preaching sympathy for tyrants in Vienna’, declared Blind in a confiscated treatise on ‘war risk’, before going on to call for the ‘arming’ of the German people against the danger of a European war which, in the case of ‘victory’, would ‘not bring freedom’ and, in the event of a defeat, ‘would strike us from the book of nations’.\textsuperscript{413} Radicals like Blind were convinced that Austria’s war was dynastic, not national.

Not all radicals and socialists toed the line of the majority of their comrades. A few, like Jakob Venedey, initially backed Vienna against Napoleon III, but then changed allegiances, after the peace of Villafranca, to Prussia as the only defence.


\textsuperscript{407} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{408} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{409} C. Vogt, \textit{Studien zur gegenwärtigen Lage Europas} (Geneva, 1859), 51.
\textsuperscript{410} Ibid., 54, 56–7.
\textsuperscript{411} Ibid., 118.
\textsuperscript{413} Ibid., 42.
against both Austria and France. Johann Baptist von Schweitzer, who was widely suspected in socialist circles of dilettantism as the scion of a wealthy, Catholic family of Italian origin and as the grandson of the editor of the pro-Austrian Oberpostamtszeitung (Frankfurt), was exceptional in the degree of his opposition to Vogt, declaring in Österreichs Sache ist Deutschlands Sache and Widerlegung von Carl Vogt’s Studien zur gegenwärtigen Lage Europas—both written at the age of 26 in 1859—that the Habsburg regime was safeguarding the legal treaties of the international order, defending German interests against Italy and France, and furthering natural ties of kinship:

Where is the cornerstone of a unified national form to be found? Not there, where we calmly look on as a common enemy attacks our fraternal tribe, but there, where we feel ourselves to be a nation (Nation) and recognise in the injury of our brotherly tribe the injury of all.

Few other socialists were willing to go so far, even though many were sceptical of Napoleon III’s intentions. Marx, indeed, had accused Vogt on 10 May 1859 of being in the pay of the French dictator: ‘the pseudo-democratic party . . . affects to be so exasperated by Austrian brutality, as to discern liberalism on the part of the hero of December [that is, Napoleon III, who launched his coup on 2 December 1851]’, pointing to the fact ‘that some members of the last mentioned party have positively been bought by napoleons d’or, and that the great manager of this trade in consciences resides in Switzerland, being himself not only a German, but an ex-member of the German National Assembly of 1848, and an outrageous Radical’. At the ‘the opening of the great and bloody war in which Europe is now involved’, Marx and Engels gave their detached backing to Austria as a means of resisting the French and the ‘Slavs’ and of protecting Germany, with the latter going on to advocate the offensive as ‘the true method for Austria to defend herself’.

Like most of their counterparts, Marx and Engels displayed little anxiety about the costs of military engagement, with the latter hailing the first battle at Montebello, in which he reported 1,500 to 2,000 dead or wounded, as ‘fighting at last’. Their reports about the battles of Magenta and Solferino betrayed excitement about military technology and strategy, with Engels identifying entrenched or fortified positions and steam as ‘two new elements which have significantly changed warfare since Napoleon’, and they were apparently indifferent to soldiers’ suffering: neither paid much attention to casualty figures other than as a means—as in Engels’s passing reference on 21 July to ‘losses of approx. 30,000 men since the beginning of the campaign’ on the Allied side—of calculating the fighting

414 J. Venedey, Der italienische Krieg und die deutsche Volkspolitik (Hanover, 1859), especially 34–55.
415 J. B. Schweitzer, Widerlegung von Carl Vogt’s Studien zur gegenwärtigen Lage Europas (Frankfurt, 1859), 42.
strengths of the two armies. The ‘sudden and unexpected end’ of the Italian war made Marx aware that it had been ‘costly’. He accepted that it had ‘in concentrated form, brought together in a few weeks not only the heroic acts, invasions and counterinvasions, marches, battles, conquests and losses, but also the expenditure of people and money of many wars of considerably longer duration’, yet there is little indication that the exiled communist was moved to a more fundamental reassessment of modern warfare. As it became evident that Austria was losing the war (with the ‘noble’ fool Franz Joseph partly responsible), Marx and Engels moved from disengaged support to specialized criticism. It is doubtful that they ever considered the conflict a ‘German’ one (or ‘theirs’), despite their expectation that Russia and Prussia—‘unable to master the national feeling’ of the public—would be drawn into it. Other leading socialists in Germany such as Ferdinand Lassalle were more active in calling on the Prussian government to remain neutral, whilst maintaining an armed vigilance and the possibility of attacking Denmark and occupying Schleswig-Holstein, in the unlikely event of a French incursion over the Rhine or a French attempt to redraw Europe’s borders along national lines.

Liberals were less worried than radicals about Austrian tyranny and less attracted to Italian nationalism, even though the Società Nazionale Italiana served as the model for the Nationalverein. Droysen, despite harbouring ‘all imaginable sympathies’ for the ‘unfortunate’ Italians, wanted Austria to ‘have and rule Italy’ so that it was not tempted to ‘put even more pressure on Germany’, the interests of which were his ‘first concern’. ‘That the war which has been started in Italy is directly a German affair has not even been claimed by those who have taken it up, notwithstanding the fact that, where Germans fight, the sympathy of all other Germans will always be on their side’, proclaimed the rector of Berlin University Heinrich Wilhelm Dove in August 1859. Austria’s war, insinuated Constantin Rössler, was the corollary of its unnatural, imperial character, contradicting the imperatives of nation-building: ‘Austria hinders natural development. But its nemesis stands before the door. . . . The Schwarzenberg system has been judged and made forever impossible.’ Prussia should not be misled into joining Habsburg wars in Italy and the Near East, but should assume the leadership of Germany, after the withdrawal of Austria, and solve the ‘German’ problem of Schleswig-Holstein,
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collapsed the publicist. The liberal historian and military commentator Theodor von Bernhardi, writing in the *Preussische Jahrbücher*, went so far as to blame Austria for attacking France as a means of propping up its ailing imperial system of rule and re-establishing a conservative order in Europe:

> What it was actually about was the entanglement of Germany and especially Prussia in a war, the shifting of the war to the Rhine, the invasion of France with a powerful, superior military force, the destruction and banishment of the Napoleonists, and the return of Heinrich V and his befriended clerical coterie to the throne of his ancestors.

Austria’s intentions were ‘very easy to see through’, he explained to Usedom in April 1859: Vienna wanted ‘to transfer the war to Germany at any price’, meaning that the decisive battles would be fought on the Rhine and that the ‘main burden of the war’ would pass from Austria to Prussia; 1859 was the last episode in a long history of Habsburg exploitation of both Italy and Germany. Such anti-Austrian rather than pro-Italian sentiment was what linked Italian and German nationalism, in the view of Wilhelm Beseler and many other liberals:

> The German nation has no interest at all in seeing the territorial possessions and influence of the House of Habsburg-Lorraine maintained or even increased. It must be admitted, however difficult this is for many Germans, who have become accustomed—for no reason whatsoever—to looking down on the Italians, that Germany and Italy are largely in the same position vis-à-vis Austria, and that we scarcely suffer less under Austrian pressure in Germany than do our neighbours on the other side of the Alps as a result of the Austrian position in Italy.

In Beseler’s view, Prussia had to lead Germany, not Austria. Some North German old liberals—Waitz, Droysen, and Duncker—were less openly against the Habsburg monarchy in 1859, but few were for it. The liberal press displayed a similar disinterest.

The distance of readers from the events of mid-nineteenth-century conflicts was barely altered by the gradual, uneven increase of civilians’ sensitivity to violence and by the slow transformation of the technology and practices of military wounding and killing. In these respects, the American Civil War (1861–5), despite its duration, remained closer to a war of movement or adventure than either the Crimean War or the Franco-Austrian War. For much of the century, the United States had, along with Switzerland, provided German commentators with their principal example of a militia (640,000 in the initial Union levy) acting in the

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428 See also Aegidi, *Preussen und der Friede von Villafranca*.
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instead of a regular army (20,000). Thus, George McLellan, the commander of Union forces, was depicted in the *Illustrirte Zeitung* in 1862 in simple, undecorated military dress, only a drawn sabre indicating that he was an officer. In the same year, *Kladderadatsch* imagined ‘pictures of the age from America’, representing 1822 (when soldiers and taxes were to be found only in Europe), 1842 (when a European being robbed was told there was no police, only freedom), and 1862, when a brutal-looking American, robbed of half of his clothes and facing the prospect of conscription and military drill, was told to go to ‘England’ if he wanted to avoid the ‘overburden of taxation, military rule and lawlessness’ which existed in the United States. As war broke out, even though it was initially referred to as a ‘civil war’, journalists suggested, in the words of one correspondent of the *Allgemeine Zeitung* in May 1861, ‘that this war cannot last long’, because ‘the American army is comprised of people who are dragged away to arms from different occupational groups of civilian life and whose time and work are worth ten times as much in money as in Europe’. The professionalization of Union forces and leadership, with ‘Grant and Sherman [coming] from the regular army and [having] completed their military studies at the academy of West Point’, took place only in 1864 in the opinion of the *Grenzboten*, replacing the practice of promoting ‘more or less political leaders to generals’ and involving more extensive training and longer experience of warfare on the part of military volunteers.

Eventually, the mobilization of troops and rates of killing in the American Civil War exceeded those of most European conflicts, with the North widely known to dispose of an army of over 600,000 men. At the beginning of the conflict, though, the number of troops engaged in combat seemed small by European standards, not least because the different battalions of volunteers remained tied to their states: ‘200,000 men in Virginia, 150,000 on the Mississippi, 100,000 in Tennessee and Kentucky, 100,000 in Louisiana and Missouri, in Minnesota against the Indians, in Texas, North and South Carolina, Florida and the sea forts’, with ‘the rest in the interior and in California, Maryland and New York’, out of a total for the Union army of ‘600,000 at the most’ in 1863, in the judgement of one retrospective article in the *Grenzboten* in 1865.

These points themselves determine, as a result of general conditions, that the main army is deployed in the direction of the capitals, so between Washington and Richmond.

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434 See Chapter 6. The figures come from *Grenzboten*, 1864, vol. 23, no. 4, 458, with an initial Union levy in December 1861 of 682,000.

435 *Illustrirte Zeitung*, no. 967, 11 Jan. 1862. See also ibid., no. 968, 18 Jan. 1862, which showed disembarking Union troops, in the enthusiastic, disorderly state of a militia.


437 *Allgemeine Zeitung*: Beilage, 9 May 1861.


439 See, for instance, ‘Der Krieg in Nordamerika’, ibid., 58.

440 ‘Der Krieg in Nordamerika 1863 und 1864’, ibid., no. 1, 229.
the next most important force on the main transport artery, the Mississippi, and a weaker army operates in the enormous space in between these principal points, in Kentucky, Tennessee and southwards.441

The largest battle of 1861—Bull Run in Virginia on 21 July—pitted 35,000 Union soldiers against 34,000 Confederates, resulting in less than 2,000 dead and wounded on each side; the battles of 1862 and 1863 were larger, with higher numbers of casualties (approximately 18,000 dead and wounded on each side at Gettysburg, the costliest of the entire war), but no battle exceeded 200,000 men in the field, making them considerably smaller than their Napoleonic equivalents.

Most reports in the German press treated such campaigns strategically, tracking the movements of the two armies across the ‘ thinly populated landscapes of North America’ and weighing up their relative gains and losses: looking back on ‘the overall results of the events of the war’ in 1864, one article concluded that ‘the advantages between Washington and Richmond belong to the South rather than the North, because the former has, with luck, pushed back the considerably greater power of its opponent’, whereas ‘in the West the North under Grant has achieved domination over the Mississippi river and over the states of both Kentucky and Tennessee’.442 This form of reportage, which was combined with evaluations of the political significance and causes of the conflict, overshadowed coverage of ‘the internal struggle’ and ‘the bloody wrestling’ which had traditionally been understood to characterize civil wars.443 With the exception of occasional early reports on the ‘Bürgerkrieg in America’ or even the ‘Sonderbundskrieg’, which hinted at the war between a Swiss federal army and a Catholic Sonderbund in November 1847, most German journalists depicted the conflict as a normal ‘war’ or an ‘American war’ between two states, rather than a fratricidal conflict which divided families and communities.444

The headlines of major articles in the Allgemeine Zeitung were telling, betraying the evolution of an unknown ‘civil war’ into a familiar inter-state conflict combined with a separate and predominant sphere of domestic politics. Thus, there was a transition from ‘Der Bürgerkrieg in Amerika’ (9 May 1861) and ‘Der Sonderbundskrieg in den vereinigten Staaten von Amerika’ (11 May 1861), via ‘Der Wendepunkt in dem amerikanischen Krieg’ (29 July 1862), ‘Die zweite Schlacht am Bull Run’ (22 September 1862), and ‘Die Schlacht bei Gettysburg’ (20 July 1863), to more explicitly political headlines such as ‘Petersburg, Atlanta und die Präsidentenwahl in den Vereinigten Staaten’ (25 August 1864), ‘Der Krieg und die politischen Parteien in den Vereinigten Staaten’ (5 September 1864), and

442 Ibid., 1864, vol. 23, no. 4, 326, and ibid., 1865, vol. 24, no. 1, 238.
443 Ibid.; here, the reference was left without further commentary at the end of an article which had focused exclusively on the movements of the two armies.
‘Der Präsidentenwahl in den Ver. Staaten’ (22 September 1864).\textsuperscript{445} Even those correspondents who—early in the conflict—understood it as a ‘revolution’, which would ‘fundamentally reconcile differences of interest and opinion’ after further ‘sacrifices’, generally avoided reference to a ‘civil war’, with its connotations of uncontrolled brutality and internecine killing.\textsuperscript{446} As a war, ‘we can say . . . that the armies still lack a warlike core and nature’, wrote the same correspondent in the \textit{Preußische Jahrbücher} in 1862: ‘The intensity of the fighting has only reached that of 1849 in Hungary or 1860 in Italy, at most, but not that of the Crimea or the campaign of 1859 in Italy.’\textsuperscript{447} As the bloodshed increased in 1863 and 1864, there were descriptions of what the \textit{Allgemeine Zeitung}—at the time of the battles of Petersburg and Atlanta in August 1864—labelled the ‘atrocious slaughter’ of modern warfare, yet they remained rare.\textsuperscript{448} In general, German reports of the American war became more and more disparate over the last two years of the conflict, eclipsed by the ‘German’ war in Schleswig-Holstein.

Warfare, it seemed from a reading of the press, was changing by the mid-nineteenth century, becoming more destructive, but it still appeared to be a distant adventure or a strategic game for amateurs and experts. Some journalists passed on their anxieties about the suffering and death which they experienced in more explicit reportage of events. The battlefields were a long way away, though, with news of Abraham Lincoln’s assassination on 15 April 1865, in one of the final acts of the Civil War, working its way to \textit{Kladderadatsch} ‘from far across the ocean’, for example.\textsuperscript{449} The ‘German’ wars which occurred either affected few combatants—in Schleswig-Holstein in 1848–51—or they were seen, with some exceptions, to be ‘Austrian’ affairs, most notably in Hungary in 1849 and Italy in 1859. Many German subjects had served in the military but few had fought in a war, the principal ‘memories’ of which—by the early 1860s—were historical, dating back fifty years to the Napoleonic campaigns. The public commemorations and histories of these military conflicts were romantic, helping to establish an heroic conception of warfare which military service and the prominence of the army in daily life normalized. News from exotic wars abroad, imagined in visual form, fed readers’ existing fascination and did little, despite premonitions of horrifying violence, to deter subjects from going to war. Thus, when conflicts looked likely to escalate in 1848–9, 1854–6, and 1859, political leaders, journalists, and ‘public opinion’, as far as can be judged, were willing to countenance the possibility of war.

\textsuperscript{445} These political headlines were accompanied in the latter stages of the war by the continuation of straightforwardly military headlines: for instance, ‘Vom amerikanischen Krieg’ (22 September 1864), ‘Der Krieg in Nordamerika’ (9 April 1865), and ‘Aus den Vereinigten Staaten’ (13 April 1865). Such articles also appeared in periodicals such as the \textit{Preußische Jahrbücher}: ‘Der Krieg in Nordamerika seit der Entscheidung im Westen’, 1865, vol. 15, 258–91; ‘Der Krieg in Nordamerika und die Präsidentenwahl im Herbst 1864’, 1865, vol. 16, 324–43.

\textsuperscript{446} \textit{Preußische Jahrbücher}, 1862, vol. 10, 487. ‘Der Wendepunkt im nordamerikanischen Bürgerkrieg’, ibid., 1863, vol. 51, no. 1, 212, was more critical, terming the conflict ‘a social war’, not a political one or a ‘civil war to put down a rebellion’. It nevertheless avoided references of a war of all against all, which had typified historical treatments of civil war and the ‘Thirty Years’ War, in particular.

\textsuperscript{447} Ib. , 483. \textsuperscript{448} \textit{Allgemeine Zeitung}, 25 Aug. 1864.

\textsuperscript{449} ‘Zum 15. April’, \textit{Kladderadatsch}, vol. 18, no. 20, 30 Apr. 1865, 77.
Their stance was arguably less the consequence of a hardening of attitudes, visible in the liberal Ludwig August von Rochau’s championing of *Realpolitik*, than of the consolidation of heroic conceptions of combat.450 Between 1864 and 1871, this willingness was tested extensively for the first time since 1815.

450 The section on war in L. A. v. Rochau, *Grundsätze der Realpolitik* (Stuttgart, 1853), vol. 1, 100–8, is actually concerned to establish legal and other limits to the use of violence.